COMMONWEAL

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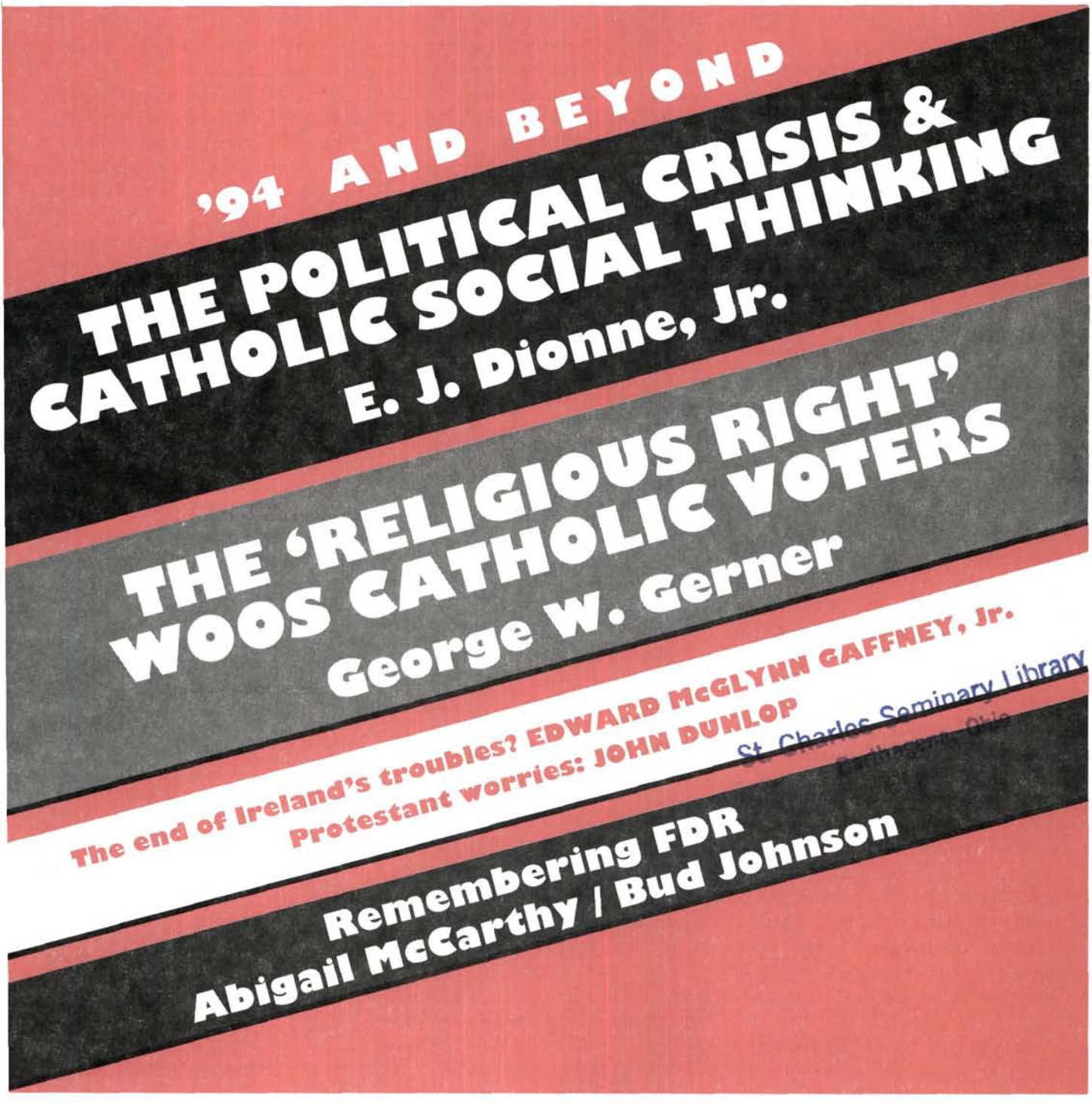
'94 AND BEYOND
THE POLITICAL CRISIS & CATHOLIC SOCIAL THINKING
E. J. Dionne, Jr.
THE 'RELIGIOUS RIGHT' WOOS CATHOLIC VOTERS
George W. Gerner
The end of Ireland's troubles? EDWARD McGLYNN GAFFNEY, Jr.
Protestant worries: JOHN DUNLOP
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CORRESPONDENCE

We're glad we asked

Broomall, Pa.

To the Editors: In the winter issue of the *Commonweal Associates Newsletter*, you asked its readers what they thought about the special issue on Eucharistic Presence [January 27]. Your questions: "Did you find the articles difficult? (We did.) *Too* difficult? (Some of us did.) Upsetting? (Some readers did.) Clarifying? A help to devotion? Would you let us know?"

I am replying because you seemed a little defensive, even embarrassed. On the other hand, I am most enthusiastic about what you did in that issue.

Serially, it was difficult, but not excessively so. A bit compressed, perhaps? But stimulating rather than upsetting. Clarifying? Aye, there's the rub! I really don't think that you could do anything much more valuable than to devote a series of articles, one to each of the major topics touched on briefly in that survey. Would that be possible without getting hip-deep into jargon? I've never been able to stay awake with Karl Rahner.

A help to devotion? Dear God! Can anything more be done to kill devotion after two millennia of "not disturbing the faith of the little ones"? Without attempting to assess the ultimate tenability of any of the positions advanced in those brief essays, they did at the very least show a serious and honest effort to have Christian belief find some purchase in a universe no longer statically conceived and a humankind liberated from the round of the "sacred year." Hurrah! I was so encouraged that I sent them to one of my sons, a man of forty honestly searching for some meaning in this "charnel house" but unable to go back to the "simple" faith he left years ago.

Well, you did ask. To help you evaluate, I'm seventy-ish, forty years a university professor (history), a father of ten and grandfather of seventeen, and, as you may have guessed, Catholic.

BERNARD F. REILLY

Stimulating; costly

Yonkers, N.Y.

To the Editors: In answer to your questions about the Eucharistic Presence articles: I found FitzPatrick lively enough to move me into buying his book, *In Breaking of Bread* [$60!]. The other fellow I thought a shade callow. Needs some time "in the field"? A decade or so?

You guys do not have an easy time of it, I'm sure: needing to be both faithful and wide awake. (Like trying to be honest with a woman whom you wish you loved more.) I find poems the only (barely) adequate way to deal with such complexity.

PETE GREEN

The really Real Presence

Alexandria, Va.

To the Editors: To answer the questions about the issue on Eucharistic Presence that were put in the winter issue of the *Associates Newsletter*:

Did I find the articles difficult...too difficult? To understand, no. To reconcile with my Catholic faith, yes.

Upsetting? Very. And just as upsetting, perhaps more so, was Nathan Mitchell's nuanced and qualified reply to Father Robert Imbelli [Correspondence, March 10].

Clarifying? To the extent of possibly clarifying how the 33 percent of American Catholics who still believe in Real Presence can join the 66 percent who don't.

A help to devotion? Quite the reverse. I feel marginalized by the kind of theology being done by Mitchell and P.J. FitzPatrick. It's in line with what I heard last fall at a major liturgy conference in Philadelphia: Reception of Eucharist is merely a "reminder" that the congregation is the "primary" Presence of Christ. That one actually drove me to the new Catechism and to Vatican II documents to see if I still qualified as a Catholic!

Understand, I am a *Commonweal* Catholic—not an Opus Dei reactionary. I am ecumenical, justice-oriented, supportive of church reform, especially with regard to the ordination of women. I subscribe to *Theological Studies*. I am preparing a book on poetry and theology for Oxford University Press. I attend a Jesuit parish that's SRO for every Mass and at fifty I'm the oldest worshiper there.

Let me close by sharing my experience of the Catholic Worker in Los Angeles. These extraordinary lay people living in voluntary poverty are prophetically, some would say fanatically, in love with "the liturgy of the world." They believe with Dorothy Day that a homeless person is not "like Jesus, she *is* Jesus." But they're just as certain that the Eucharist *is* Jesus.We celebrate Mass on the stained oilcloth of the kitchen table. Homeless people, AIDS victims, Salvadoran refugees, and volunteers crowd the room flooded with sunlight. Outside is the clash of Skid Row; overhead, the everpresent LAPD helicopter. Jesus is EVERYWHERE. But he is ALSO, for each of us there, in the half-stale loaf of white bread and bottle of Gallo wine in the middle of the table, present in true body and blood, the source and sustenance of our Catholic Christian faith.

At that table we do not believe—we

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McNamara's book

Robert S. McNamara's repentant *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam* (Times Books), has exposed a national wound that has not healed, and could not, until he or someone of his rank and level of accountability spoke. Like "McNamara's War" (in which more than 3 million Vietnamese and 58,000 Americans died), McNamara's book has touched something deep and raw in the American psyche. Interviews, editorials, letters to the editor, TV debates have come even before people have read the book itself. On one side, some supporters of America's longest war have reacted in fury to the McNamara bombshell: veterans' and POW groups, South Vietnamese expatriates, bereaved families. On the other side, some opponents of the war have gloated over McNamara's confession. The *New York Times*—which disciplined some of its own correspondents for reporting the truth about Vietnam too early—was harshly and unsparingly critical of McNamara for his decades of silence. On all sides, people are still fighting to "win" the war.

If there is one lesson this reaction to *In Retrospect* teaches, it is that the divisions of the Vietnam War will never fully die, for even when the nation finally takes responsibility for its mistakes to the degree McNamara has, the echoes of the war will touch our politics and our national consciousness. But President Bill Clinton got it right in his assessment of the McNamara memoir: "I do not believe that the book should be used as yet another opportunity to divide the United States....We should learn from what happened, resolve not to repeat our mistakes, honor the service of Americans, and go forward together."

To reread the official memoranda and documentation (see, for example, *Vietnam: A History in Documents*, 1981) issued by then-Secretary of Defense McNamara is to see McNamara's fabled quantitative intellect at work during the war years. But to read them in light of *In Retrospect* is to witness a Janus-like spectacle. The crisply written communiqués McNamara sent Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson on the prospects and progress of the conflict—recommending higher troop assignments than even Johnson was willing to order at the time—send a shudder when read in the light of McNamara's reconsiderations. These contradictory perspectives show why the man and the nation were pulled apart; but they help us understand McNamara's remorse, his overwhelming "sense of grief and failure."

We have here an epic struggle of a bright and focused intelligence at war not only with the limits of knowledge but with the intricacies of the heart and the demands of the moral world. It is a personal tracing of the fault lines that lie between matters of state, loyalty to one's leaders, and the requirements of personal integrity. These are questions rarely addressed "in open view" by public officials, and only in the quietest hours of the night by most of us. They are proposed even less often to nations or states by their leaders.

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McNamara, ever the public man, writes that he is confessing past failures now because they have contributed to a deep cynicism among Americans about their government. He thinks that cynicism is destructive, and he is right. But it is not entirely misplaced. Witness the Nixon-Kissinger bombing of Cambodia; Watergate; the *contra* war; Lee Atwater's use of the race wedge; countless ethical investigations of congressmen, senators, cabinet members, and even presidents and Supreme Court nominees. A skeptical vigilance is the price we must pay for democracy.

McNamara's memoir is flawed. Does he still believe, for example, that his and the nation's errors were "Not of values and intentions but [only] of judgment and capabilities"? Or that Kennedy, had he lived, would have altered the course of the war? Nevertheless, he has managed to raise again, almost single-handedly, *the* questions that still haunt us: What was it that was so rotten about that undeclared war? What did it do to us? How did we slip into the morass, at first supporting and then undercutting dictators of our own making in the South, and all the time disdaining the people of what Johnson called "that damn little piss-ant country"? Why does it divide us still?

Here, McNamara's book has much to offer. Our policy was "wrong, terribly wrong," he writes. It was predicated on faulty assumptions about a country we barely knew and about the possibilities of unlimited American power. It was justified by larger, geopolitical policy assumptions—ones we still hail as having led to the end of the cold war. But Vietnam was largely a nationalist war. That is its importance for the post cold-war world. For the choices that face us today are mostly about how a superpower democracy reacts to the threat of instability or the temptation to impress its will on the longings of others for self-determination. When and how can we act more effectively? Should we strive to be an honest facilitator or a self-appointed judge of the nations? McNamara wisely warns in an interview with *Newsweek*'s Jonathan Alter (April 17): "Don't misjudge the nature of conflict. Don't underestimate the power of nationalism. Many conflicts of the future will be about nationalism. Don't overestimate what outside military forces can accomplish—they can't reconstruct a 'failed' state. And don't act unilaterally unless the security of our country is directly threatened."

Repentance—whether of an individual or a people—is essentially and initially a unilateral act. It requires the shattering of a self-imposed silence, a turning back, a necessary confession. But even then, it is a reply to a deeper, more silent, moving voice. Repentance follows only after an individual—or a nation—recognizes that a deep self-contradiction lies within its being. When that recognition has risen to the power of speech, then and only then is reconciliation possible.

In 1967, Vietnamese monk and poet Nhat Hanh wrote, *When can I break my long silence? When can I speak the unuttered words that are choking me?* In 1995, Robert S. McNamara has finally spoken the unuttered words of his heart. His book may not be a perfect act of contrition, but it is a courageous act. It is a gift to his country: A nation still at war with itself, still in need of clarifying its vision, promise, and role.

ET CETERA

SCHOOL AID Instead of cutting appropriations for school lunches or college loans, Congress ought to cut one complete school: the U.S. Army School of the Americas (SOA) at Fort Benning, Georgia. Each year, SOA trains 2,000 Latin American and Caribbean soldiers at a cost of over $3 million to U.S. taxpayers. Since its inception in 1946, SOA—meant to be a means of professionalizing and democratizing the military in those countries—has too often been an academy associated with torture and repression.

Of 246 Colombian officers accused of human-rights violations, 105 are SOA alumni. So are 4 of the 5 senior officers who organized a notorious Honduran death squad, Battalion 3-16. And if Manuel Noriega (Panama), Leopoldo Galtieri (Argentina), and Roberto D'Aubuisson (El Salvador) have more in common than being graduates of SOA, it is their subsequent records of abusive power. In El Salvador alone, where fifteen years ago D'Aubuisson had Archbishop Oscar Romero assassinated, 48 of 69 officers cited for human rights violations by the 1993 UN Truth Commission were SOA graduates, including 10 of the 12 responsible for the El Mozote massacre and 19 of the 26 involved in the '89 murder of six Jesuits and two co-workers. Last year, Paraguay's police archives yielded a "confidential" SOA torture manual that, among other things,

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taught interrogators how to keep electric-shock victims alive. More recently, a Guatemalan graduate, Colonel Julio Roberto Alpirez, a reported CIA operative, is accused of torture and assassination.

Congressman Joseph Kennedy (D-Mass.) has repeatedly sponsored amendments to end SOA subsidies. This year, budget cutters ought to do the job.

For an award-winning video on the SOA, *see* Maryknoll World Productions' "School of Assassins" ($14.95, 1-800-227-8523), an eighteen-minute film narrated by Susan Sarandon. It was nominated for this year's Academy Award in the "Documentary Short Subject" category.

REPORT ON IRELAND'S 'TROUBLES'

CLINTON'S GREEN THUMB

APPLYING THE RIGHT PRESSURE

One should not exaggerate the American contribution to the resolution of the Irish question. The heavy lifting is being done by the Irish and the English. But it remains true that at each turning of a very complicated path over the past year, President Bill Clinton has nudged the process of reconciliation along with subtle and appropriate external pressure. In February 1994, over the objections of Prime Minister John Major and Secretary of State Warren Christopher, the president granted a visa to Gerry Adams, president of Sinn Féin, when Adams was still viewed as a terrorist pariah by the British government. As the Irish Taoiseach, John Bruton, remarked at the Shamrock Ceremony in the White House this past March 17, "The willingness to take risks, to do things that many of us might have thought foolhardy at the time—like granting a visa to Gerry Adams—has been proven to be right. You made the right decision."

Why was Clinton's gesture right? Because it acknowledged that the crucial conversations between Adams and John Hume, leader of Northern Ireland's Social Democratic and Labor party, in the fall of 1993 represented a genuine breakthrough in twenty-five years of the Troubles in Northern Ireland. To quote Bruton again, Clinton's initiative gave Sinn Féin "a glimpse of the political dividend that was there for them by pursuing a peaceful rather than a violent path." And not only was Adams given a platform to express his nationalist views in America without censorship or the filtering system of the British government, but more importantly, the leaders of the other four political parties in Northern Ireland (Hume, Ian Paisley of the Democratic Unionist party, James Molyneux of the Ulster Unionist party, and John Alderdice of the Alliance party) were all able for the first time to articulate their concerns about the future of their country in a common and neutral context. What was surprising in the conversations in New York last year was not the obvious differences among these leaders, but the areas of their convergence, beginning with Adams's unforgettable promise to "remove the gun permanently from Irish politics." From that breakthrough followed the IRA cease-fire on August 31 and the Loyalist cease-fire on October 13.

Clinton's next move was to invite Adams to the White House for a visit with Vice-President Al Gore and National Security Adviser Anthony Lake. The president himself was careful to be busy in another wing of the White House at the time. He was equally adept at reaching out to all the leaders of the contending parties in Northern Ireland. In so doing the president sent another important signal to Dublin and London that there can be no comprehensive way out of the impasse in Northern Ireland without the collaboration of the divergent traditions and communities in that divided island.

Like most first-term presidents, Clinton wants to be re-elected. And he is smart enough to know that pols like Senators Christopher Dodd (D–Conn.), Edward Kennedy (D–Mass.), and Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D–N.Y.), will provide far greater help in that effort than Prime Minister John Major, who fumed over Clinton's next moves: giving the green light to Gerry Adams to come to this country in March to raise money for Sinn Féin and inviting Adams to the White House for the Clintons' annual Saint Patrick's Day party. These gestures endeared the president to lots of the 44 million Irish-Americans who vote. But Clinton was calculating not his political fortunes as much as his historic role as a peacemaker. Against

"Typical! You wait twenty-five years for a cease-fire and then suddenly two come along."

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the advice of his attorney general, Janet Reno, the president took this latest initiative to reward Adams for his commitment to move forward the tricky process of decommissioning of weapons. In the presence of Bruton, Adams, and Hume at the party, Clinton quoted Finley Peter Dunne's famous definition of a fanatic as "someone who is sure that God would be on his side if only he knew all the facts," and he urged "all the parties concerned to put aside all extremism for the common good of peace." This echoed nicely the recurrent theme in the recent *New Framework* document on Northern Ireland to pursue agreement "by exclusively democratic, peaceful means, without resort to violence or coercion."

When Adams came to New York to raise funds for Sinn Féin last March, he assured prospective donors that all funds collected here will be dedicated exclusively to the democratic goal of enlarging the spectrum of opinion about the political process in Ireland. And he guaranteed that the books of his political organization will be subject to the careful scrutiny of an annual audit by a Big Six accounting firm. Those of us who can remember all the cash stashed away in Maurice Stans's safe in the office of the Secretary of Commerce and all the dirty tricks that were financed by the Committee to Re-Elect the President [Nixon] should be satisfied that Sinn Féin is in a much better position to assure American supporters that their contributions will never be spent on guns than the Republican party was able to promise its supporters in 1972 that their contributions would be spent in fair and honest electioneering.

Clinton's pressure on England and Ireland in these matters has been consistently appropriate. Not too little, avoiding the appearance of disinterest shown by his predecessors (including John Fitzgerald Kennedy), who left the Irish question to be resolved by the English, at least since the partition of Ireland. Nor too much, avoiding the appearance of unduly intervening in the troubles of old and dear friends. Clinton understands better than his predecessors that all the Irish must be involved in the resolution of the Irish question.

And the president understands that this question is actually a complicated set of questions involving economics as much as politics. That is what drove his decision to ask former Senator George Mitchell to continue his public service by supervising a major economic initiative in Ireland. This program is directly related to the prospect of a just and lasting peace that includes equality of opportunity for both traditions

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Protestant Ireland

People often speak about Ireland as a geographical entity. When they speak about its people, either within the island as a whole, or within Northern Ireland in particular, they often speak as if the people were homogeneous in their cultural and religious identities. The fact that we cannot be thus described has first to be understood, before we start to propose ways of dealing with the issues.

It is easier to speak about uniting territory than it is to address the challenge of uniting diverse people, some of whom do not wish to be united.

These matters run deep as they involve the mythic consciousness of people. They touch deeply upon a people's sense of identity. They invoke deep passions and release deep hatreds and ancient anxieties, deeper than rationality. In the name of these things people are killed, politicians rise and fall, and policies are made, treaties signed, and agreements abrogated.

One recent experience illustrates my conviction that the realities of the people of Ireland are not well understood beyond our shores.

At a conference on the subject of "Beyond Hate" which was held recently in Derry, an American visitor responded to my introduction of myself as a Presbyterian minister and the current Presbyterian moderator with the words, "I didn't know that there were any Presbyterians in Ireland." There are in fact 350,000 Presbyterians in Ireland, constituting about 10 percent of the population of the whole island or 28 percent of the population of Northern Ireland.

Raymond Helmick, S.J., who spent enough time in Ireland talking to Presbyterians to understand how we think, wrote about us in these terms:

> The environment of clerical domination of Irish life and the dread of that power, led the Protestant people in the first instance to defend the rights of dissenting nonconformist minorities. Being afraid of Roman rule they did not extend their hands generously to their Catholic neighbors, being afraid that if the dissenting tradition was not protected, it would disappear in an environment which was centralist and authoritarian, or in one in which the dissenting tradition would be consistently outvoted in a democracy intent on imposing policies at variance with dissenting notions of liberty.

It is perfectly possible to make out a reasonable case for unionist resistance to being incorporated in a centrist, Catholic, ultramontane, nationalist Ireland. What you cannot make out a case for is a style of unionism which is itself, in its turn, exclusive, dominating, discriminatory, and unjust. Nationalist distrust of and objection to being incorporated within such a state is as understandable as Unionist resistance to a United Ireland. Both forms of feared subservience will be resisted.

JOHN DUNLOP

The Rev. John Dunlop, a leading figure in the Presbyterian Church, Ireland, has been minister of Rosemary Congregation, Belfast, since 1979. These remarks are excerpted from an address he gave to the Cleveland City Club on February 23, 1995.

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and communities in Northern Ireland. The man who once said, "It's the economy, stupid," is not oblivious to the widespread unemployment that plagues Ireland today, North and South. He is aware, moreover, that in the North, twice as many Catholics as Protestants are out of work. These are the tough issues that the president has called to be explored in a major White House conference this month. Thanks in no small part to his leadership, the harp may be taken up again to sing new songs of a brighter day for Ireland.

EDWARD McGLYNN GAFFNEY, JR.

Edward McGlynn Gaffney, Jr., is the dean of the Valparaiso University School of Law.

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WILL CHINA KICK THE HABIT?

LESSONS FROM PIRACY

The federal government's activities may soon start shrinking, but you wouldn't know it from all the human and material resources that Washington is pouring into the promotion of American business interests in foreign lands. Nowhere is there so much at stake, commercially and otherwise, as in the People's Republic of China. There the most high-profile and onerous task of the administration's whole campaign, dubbed as one of "commercial engagement," is to break China of a lucrative bad habit: massively exploiting copyrights, patents, and other intellectual property without reimbursing the owners, who are largely Americans.

Over the years, Washington has repeatedly denounced China's "rampant piracy." It estimated the costs to American intellectual property owners in 1993 at more than $1 billion in lost sales and revenue, about two-thirds in software products, the rest in movies, books, and miscellaneous knockoffs ranging from Gillette blades to Chrysler Jeeps. Most of this output is exported to East Asia, where properly licensed work from the United States or Japan must compete at a price disadvantage.

Private investigators of the victimized U.S. industries, banded together in the Washington-based International Intellectual Property Alliance, focused on the largest center for counterfeit production, Southern China, widely hailed as the country's model for modernization. There they found twenty-nine factories, at least a few owned by military or civilian government agencies, running a booming industry using stolen masters to copy compact and laser disks on a mass basis, estimated at 75 million copies last year.

A visit to Beijing in mid-January by seven heavyweights from the U.S. movie, music, and software industries, including Jack Valenti of the Motion Picture Association of America, turned into an unusual sight for the capital of the world's largest Communist country: private business executives publicly lobbying the Chinese government and feeding the media with criticism and incriminating information. Reuters reported from Beijing that the group called China "the world's worst pirate nation."

The showdown over piracy was—and is—a highly sensitive subject for U.S.-China relations, because the finger of guilt clearly points not just to bands of rogue operators but to various arms of the government itself. After years of talking with Beijing about the issue, most recently in nine rounds of negotiation stretching over twenty months, Washington finally flexed its muscles. With ample forewarning, on February 4, U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor announced plans to impose the largest trade sanctions in U.S. history—to go into effect in three weeks. The threat of huge sanctions, credible because U.S. industry supported them, focused the minds of senior officials in Beijing. After further intensive negotiations, the two sides endorsed a twenty-page, single-spaced agreement on February 26, just at or a little after the U.S. deadline.

Among Beijing's commitments were to launch an intensive campaign against piracy and to give market access to legitimate U.S. products to replace counterfeit goods. As a sign of good faith, Beijing forced the closure of several Southern Chinese factories notorious for piracy, including one that churned out movie hits like *The Lion King* and *Jurassic Park* before they were available on the U.S. market.

Will Beijing carry out these commitments? Consider the precedents. After all, the United States went toe-to-toe with Beijing this time only because of China's failure to enforce the copyright and patent laws that it adopted after signing a "memorandum of understanding" with the United States more than three years ago. Besides, two formal U.S.-China agreements in 1992 and 1994 have failed to staunch the flow of exports made with prison labor, according to the Laogai Research Foundation, which with tiny resources monitors this violation of U.S. law more closely than does the U.S. government.

The problem lies much deeper than getting China to halt illegal activities. It lies in the nature of China's system. Despite a drive toward modernization, China remains "sometimes totalitarian, sometimes authoritarian, always unpredictable," as the *Far Eastern Economic Review* put it last year. The recurrent dream of doing land-office business with a country of so many potential customers—now 1.2 billion—blinds many foreigners to the reality that China's people are twice poor: among the poorest people in the world and also deprived of the rule of law. Instead, the rule of the Communist party reaches everywhere, even into factories of the numerous new joint ventures, where party functionaries look over the shoulders of managers.

A wide implementation of the promised reforms called for in the February agreement would involve a step toward the rule of law, and therefore a whittling away at the monopoly power of the party. But no bureaucracy willingly surrenders the power it has won. The ability of China's party to avoid that fate is enhanced by the absence of three preconditions for the rule of law: an independent judiciary, an independent press, and a network of organizations independent of government, such as a group representing the rights of China's own authors, inven-

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tors, and other intellectual property owners. Fundamentally, then, what is at stake in this struggle is not just the rights of U.S. property owners, mostly quite rich, but also the rights of the Chinese people, mostly very poor.

"What U.S. media moguls [potentially the major beneficiaries of the new agreement] should have the courage to say is that there is virtually no way to have a legal system that respects property rights and simultaneously ignores the civil rights of individuals," Michael Scrage, research associate at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, recently wrote in his business column (*Washington Post*, February 10). In the same vein, Thomas Friedman wrote in the *New York Times* (January 8): "China's trade abuses and human rights abuses are just flip sides of the same coin—the absence of the rule of law."

Friedman found some sympathy for that position among some U.S. business executives he met in Hong Kong and Beijing, but so far it has little support from the leaders of organized business in the United States. In May of 1994, when President Bill Clinton delinked human rights from China's entitlement to trade privileges as a "Most Favored Nation" (MFN), he announced a "new and vigorous American program" to promote human rights in China, including "the development, with American business leaders, of a voluntary set of principles for business activity in China." Such a code would, for example, rule out contracting for goods made by prison or child labor, and require recognition of the right to unionize.

Currently the dominant thinking within the administration is that a code should apply worldwide rather than singling out China. Whatever its geographical scope, the challenge is to make it more than a public relations exercise. Yet in China, and under similar but smaller regimes, the code does pose a special problem. If it omits a commitment to respecting freedom of association for workers, it would be devoid of a fundamental principle. If (as seems likely) that commitment is included, employers who conscientiously implement the code might find some of their workers landing in jail. Such are the dilemmas of doing business in China.

The vast U.S. public and private "engagement" with a Communist superpower, half totalitarian, half authoritarian, is a pioneering journey through uncharted waters. China's most famous human rights advocate, Wei Jingschen, has publicly alerted the United States to the risks posed by navigating without a human-rights compass. In an article published in English and Chinese in Hong Kong last year, before Beijing ordered his rearrest in March, Wei criticized China's policy of allowing foreigners many rights not accorded to Chinese citizens and warned that it could cause a backlash ("a deep popular emotion of revenge") against foreigners, including business people.

Under its traditional ideology, Beijing insists on the principle of national sovereignty as an argument against any outside intervention in its "internal affairs." Most American economists and business people, under their own traditional ideologies, usually appeal to the principle of free trade as an argument against any governmental intervention in the international marketplace. In confronting Beijing on China's piracy, however, U.S. government and business leaders recognized that, because of new concerns posed by the new global economy, the U.S. should not be a prisoner of principles held inviolable in another age. Human-rights concerns deserve the same recognition. They belong high on the agenda of the trade policies that the U.S. pursues bilaterally with China and multilaterally within the powerful World Trade Organization, reborn early this year in Geneva.

There's one good way to test whether China is significantly evolving toward the rule of law. It is not so much whether Barbra Streisand and Bill Gates get paid their royalties, but whether Bejing starts treating Nobel Prize nominee Wei Jingsheng as a citizen of China, having at least as many rights as Jack Valenti and other visiting American business leaders.

ROBERT A. SENSER

Robert A. Senser, a retired labor attaché with the U.S. Foreign Service, writes for a number of periodicals on human rights issues in Asia. His most recent article in Commonweal *was "Danger! Children at Work" [August 19, 1994].*

OF SEVERAL MINDS John Garvey

CHRISTIANITY ISN'T 'SPIRITUAL'

WHAT 'RESURRECTION' MEANS

There is a distance between what people think they believe, and what they actually believe. Most Christians might say they agree with every single word of the Nicene Creed, but I am not sure this would hold up under serious questioning. I'm not concerned here with the question of hypocrisy, that is, the question of how can we say that we believe these things and still live as badly as we do; I find that very easy to understand. Living up to what the words of the Creed mean would demand of us a transformation that involves great struggle, and a willingness to enter into a dangerous relationship with the Living God. Our hypocrisy is easy to understand, if tragic.

What I mean is that when we say, "I look for the resurrection of the dead, and life in the age to come," this does not square with what you often encounter when talking with many Christians about what they think of death, and life after death. I could be wrong, but the belief of most Christians seems to be much closer to Neoplatonism than to anything truly Christian, and it has no biblical basis. Or it involves a strange Cartesianism, in which the soul is a kind of "ghost in the machine," the machine being the cruder part of the duality, the body. Most people think of the soul as something that goes somewhere else when

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the body dies. This certainly squares with ancient pagan belief, where, in Hades, souls were "shadows of their former selves" and existed in a kind of half-life. The Neoplatonism comes in when the state of the liberated spirit is seen as superior to the poor embodied soul, trapped in mortal flesh.

This is important, because when a misunderstanding becomes pervasive, and when the misunderstanding involves something central to a religious tradition, the tradition itself is challenged: It isn't only "a part" of the teaching but the point of the teaching, that is called into question.

In the case of Jesus' Resurrection, what I believe is a common Christian misunderstanding is a challenge to what the Incarnation means, and moves the tradition from the Bible into a form of Neoplatonism. Although most Christians would be willing to say "Christ will come again," this is not a central part of their faith. They hope for a "life after death." This is not really a Christian phrase, or it is at least totally insufficient.

There is life—you have it or you don't—and there is death. A corpse is what it looks like. What you see is not a shell whose true but hidden tenant has gone somewhere else. It is the person you loved, dead.

When we say that we believe in the resurrection of the dead we confess a hope that the God who is the source of life will raise this loved person (who would never have existed without God's love) to a transformed life, one which will include the body, at the time when God heals and renews the obviously wounded universe we live in. We do not know what this life will be like, or feel like; we cannot imagine it. But we do not believe that we will be completely what we are called by God to be until we have been raised from the dead.

The question of "where the soul is" between the time of death and the time of resurrection has led to a lot of speculation (including the idea of purgatory), but it has always seemed to me that too much imagining and too little of what might be called holy agnosticism has been involved in the thinking. It could be that, because death ends "now" and "then" (time being as physical as the flesh), we find ourselves after death in the presence of God, whose only moment encompasses all moments, including the time of universal restoration. We might find ourselves resurrected.

"You're right, this really is the life!"

But no one really knows, and it is not faith, but a strange curiosity, that leads us to speculate this way. It can also lead us to inappropriate defensiveness and fear. Some religious people feel terribly threatened by those scientific investigations that locate consciousness completely in neurons, and memory in a combination of nerve-firings and chemistry. The soul is meant to be "spiritual" (which from this point of view means "nonmaterial").

My own feeling is that science of this sort can only threaten Neoplatonism. Nothing could be more truly materialistic, in one important sense, than the tradition which affirms the resurrection of the body. The Christian vision cannot be demonstrated scientifically. It requires a great leap of faith to believe that the God who knew us before time began, who willed us into being, will give us a somehow embodied life because God loves us. But it is not Christian teaching that a soul escapes the body to go somewhere better, leaving all material being behind, to live as a pure spirit in a better place.

That is not unimportant, because the Incarnation itself gives a holiness to flesh which is, as the Scripture insists, a scandal. That holiness is affirmed in the idea that we do not live disembodied after death, but we can be complete (and our death can be truly overcome) *only* in resurrection. Death is indeed part of life—and dreadful. Death is overcome only when life—which means life in the body—is given to us as it was meant to be, not as it has been wounded by sin and by death's temporary triumph. □

OF SEVERAL MINDS Abigail McCarthy

THE MIRACLE MAN

FDR & THE SAVING OF A NATION

All last month there were quiet, almost unnoticed, memorials marking the fiftieth-anniversary of the death of the twentieth-century's great president, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. There have been newspaper columns, stories on television news, and discussion shows, and a ceremony at Warm Springs, Georgia, where he died. In a time of lesser men, these have been salutary reminders that a true leader can evoke and must evoke what is best in a nation.

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He was the president of my generation's youth. I proudly cast my first vote for him in his second election to the presidency. In the previous four years he had transformed the world in which I lived. He had restored an almost despairing nation to life and energy and strength.

Much has been written about the Great Depression but to those of us who lived during it nothing can convey the reality. I have never forgotten the visceral clutch of fear I felt when one day, coming home from school, my friends and I found ourselves on the edge of a crowd of muttering and weeping adults. The bank on our route home had closed suddenly. My godfather worked in that bank, my father had been a director, and all the money my grandfather had been able to leave my grandmother was deposited there. Half the people in our small town were affected by that closing, and closings like that were repeated thousands of times across the country.

Hard times were a given. The old people we knew scraped by on pittances. Farm relatives brought food to people living in town. Saddest to remember now are the fathers who woke every morning, donned their brushed and pressed old suits, put on their hats, and went uptown to offices and stores where there was scarcely any business. And every day we were reminded that the spreading poverty was nationwide. The boxcars on the trains running through town were crowded with men, some sitting in the doorways of the empty cars, others riding precariously on top. The railroad tramps of a previous time had been joined by men by the hundreds drifting from one part of the country to the other looking for work. The old gravel pit on the edge of our town was the site of what was then called "a jungle," a place where the drifting men gathered at night, warming what food they had in tin cans over open fires.

People tried to help. My father was mayor of our town then. Every night the chief of police (there were *two* policemen!) gathered some of the men and gave as many as he could beds in the town jail. In the morning he gave them dimes to get coffee. Some of the men went through town offering to work for food. On the way to school we would see one man or the other sitting at the table the sisters kept on the convent porch.

But the desperation was growing. Industrial production was down to 56 percent of the 1929 level. Thirteen million people were unemployed. Farmers were in terrible straits, faced either with losing their farms or the inability to sell their crops. All over America dreams were dead. And people looked for someone to blame. Divisions grew. Radio was new and a means of influencing the many. Demagogues crowded the airwaves. The Communist party was growing. There were riots here and there.

And then came that jaunty, miraculous man telling us that we had nothing to fear but fear itself. "This great nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper...," he told us in his inaugural address. And we began to believe.

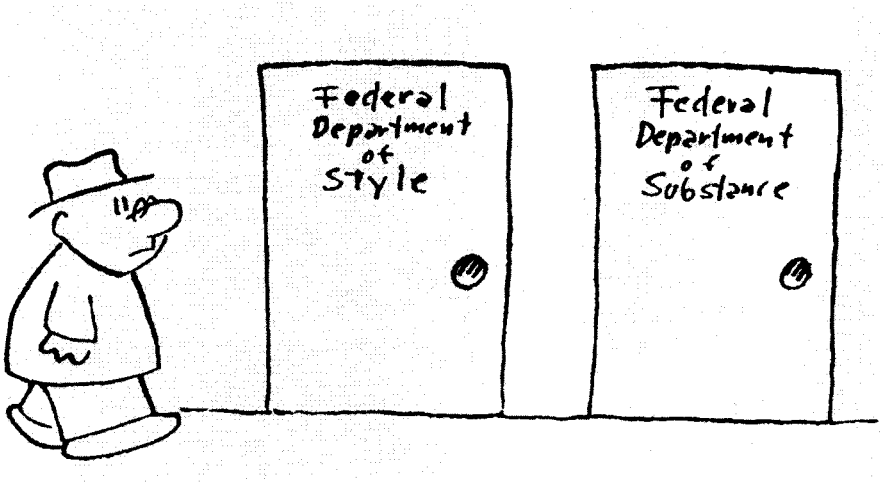
In the much-talked-about 100 days he acted quickly to do what he promised and won the enactment of the most sweeping legislative program in U.S. history. He saved the banks and reformed them through the Glass-Steagall Act and bolstered them with the Federal Deposit Insurance Act. The Federal Emergency Relief Act granted funds to states for direct relief. The Civilian Conservation Corps was to enlist 500,000 young men in reforestation and flood control work. Mortgage relief was enacted and was to aid millions of persons. The Farm Credit Administration and the Farm Bankruptcy Act helped some farmers refinance mortgages and others who had lost farms to regain them. Homes were saved for threatened homeowners by the Home Owners Loan Corporation. These and many other aspects of the New Deal touched the lives of people directly. They felt the touch of Roosevelt's compassion—the real ability to understand their condition—and the compassion of those who worked with him.

The people did not forget. On that April night when his funeral train moved toward Washington, they paid tribute. Eleanor Roosevelt described it later:

> I lay in my berth all night with the window shade up, looking out at the countryside he had loved and watching the faces of the people at stations, and even at the crossroads, who came to pay their last tribute all through the night.
>
> The only recollection I clearly have is thinking about "The Lonesome Train," the musical poem about Lincoln's death. ("A lonesome train on a lonesome track/Seven coaches painted black/A slow train, a quiet train/Carrying Lincoln home again....") I had always liked it so well—and now this was so much like it."

And on the next night as the train carried his body home to Hyde Park from Washington, the same thing was true. Henry Wallace, one of the mourners, wrote, "Although there weren't many stars out and no visible moon, I could see the silent, bowed crowds that lined the sorrowful tracks to pay tribute to their fallen leader as he made his last trip home. The train just crept along. Everything seemed dirgelike. Even the wheels sounded like so many muffled drums."

Fifty years later we, too, remember. And hope for his like again. □



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THE POLITICAL CRISIS

IT'S THE ECONOMY *AND* MORALS...

E.J. DIONNE, JR.

There are two large arguments going on right now in politics. One is over exactly what it was that happened last November. The other is over what exactly it is that ails us as a country. Contrary to a certain triumphalism apparent in Washington right now, I do not believe that either argument is settled. Indeed, I think one of the arguments—what is troubling us as a country—may be based on faulty premises on the part of both parties to it.

The first question is what happened last fall. The most popular view among Republicans is that November's vote was the big bang, the real revolution, the final fulfillment of the promises of Ronald Reagan's election. In this view, the country really has decided that government is the problem and wants the federal government cut down, chopped up, shipped off to the states. The most interesting iteration of this argument sees the 1994 election as the logical outcome to the end of the cold war. For a sixty-year period, beginning with the New Deal response to the Great Depression, continuing through World War II and then through the cold war, all of the pressures were to increase the power of government and in particular the power of Washington. Some conservatives will even concede that this whole process of aggrandizing government was necessary. But now, they will argue, there is no Depression, no Hitler, no Soviet Union—and thus no need for a big government in Washington. We are, in this view, returning to "normalcy," which is a normalcy of limited government and decentralized power. The state of emergency is over and with it the spirit of American progressivism embodied by the two Roosevelts, Woodrow Wilson, and Harry Truman.

This is a serious argument that contains some truths, but it is not, I think, the whole story. An alternative view of 1994 sees the election in terms that are much less grand. In this view, voters were not dissatisfied with big government so much as with bad government, or, more precisely, disappointing government. This view attributes the election not to the strength of Republicanism or to the power of the conservative idea, but the failure of Democrats and liberals. In 1992, Bill Clinton did indeed offer a promising synthesis aimed at updating the old Progressive and New Deal vision and accepting some corrections. The older vision was embodied in an effort to complete the New Deal and Fair Deal by passing health-care reform and to respond to economic change with various initiatives in job training and job placement. The corrections were designed to deal with the public's legitimate anxieties over the functioning of government—thus the reinventing government project—and the importance of being clear that social policy needed to embody certain values—thus a welfare-reform plan that embodied greater generosity on the side of education, training, and work opportunities, but also a sense of responsibility embodied in a work requirement and an emphasis on the need to reduce the number of out-of-wedlock births and fatherless families.

Yet in the first two years of the Clinton administration, the

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administration and a Democratic Congress failed to deliver the basic components of the program: Health-care reform failed, welfare reform never got off the ground, political reforms in lobbying and campaign-finance law died, and the administration's quite popular job-training initiatives never got financed at anything like the levels implied during the campaign.

Moreover, the benefits of the economic recovery in its first two years were unevenly distributed. The well-educated posted substantial income gains. Those without college degrees and especially those with only high school diplomas or less held their own at best, and in many cases continued to suffer income losses.

The notion that disappointment rather than ideological realignment was the real story in 1994 is underscored by several facts. First, the Republican victory was, indeed, historic, but it was also narrow. There is no denying that taking over the House of Representatives was a very, very big deal. To deny that the results, in some sense, did embody at the least an impatience with government would be foolish. Yet the fact is that Republican House candidates took only 51 percent of the vote. The Republicans won thirty of their seats with 52 percent of the vote or less.

What is most revealing, and what points most strongly to the disappointment hypothesis, is that the Democrats' 1994 losses were concentrated in the groups that had suffered a long-term decline in their economic fortunes. Between 1992 and 1994, the Democratic share of the House vote dropped a staggering twenty points—from 57 percent to 37 percent—among white male high school graduates who never went on to college. The Democrats also fell fifteen points among white males who attended college but never got a degree. Both groups are suffering in this economy. But among those doing rather well, white male college graduates, the Democrats lost only five points. Among white women, the patterns were the same but less dramatic: The Democratic share among white female high school

Is there a Catholic vote?

The story is told of a middle-class man taking his mother—call her Mrs. O'Reilly—to the polls on election day. Mrs. O'Reilly has always, always voted straight Democratic. Her upwardly mobile son, on the other hand, always splits his ticket and has been drifting more toward the Republicans. Impatiently, knowing the answer in advance, the son asks his mother how she will vote that day and Mrs. O'Reilly replies, as expected, "Straight Democratic."

"Mom," says the son, "If Jesus came back to earth and ran as a Republican you'd vote against him."

"Aw, hush!" Mrs. O'Reilly snapped back. "Why should he change his party after all these years?"

Mrs. O'Reilly is not the Catholic norm anymore. Her son is.

The notion of a "Catholic vote," of course, has always been problematic. Before the New Deal, there were sharp differences among Catholic ethnic groups in their political allegiances. The Irish and the Poles, for example, tended to be more Democratic than Italians or French-Canadians. Today, Puerto Rican and Mexican-American voters are far more Democratic than either Cubans or any wave of Catholic European immigrants.

Al Smith's candidacy in 1928 generated enormous Catholic solidarity around the Democratic party and Franklin Roosevelt won a strong Catholic vote in 1932 and 1936. But in 1940, Catholic votes again divided along ethnic lines. Because of his pro-allied sympathies, Roosevelt lost substantial ground among German and Italian Catholics and also suffered losses among Irish Catholics who were anti-British. Polish Catholics, strongly anti-Hitler, rallied to the Democrats. Harry Truman restored Democratic strength among Catholics pretty much across the board. But in 1952 and 1956, Dwight Eisenhower posted large gains among Catholics, essentially splitting the Catholic vote evenly with Adlai Stevenson in 1956.

John Kennedy, of course, changed everything, but only briefly. In the 1960 election, Kennedy won close to 80 percent of Catholic ballots against Richard Nixon. Lyndon Johnson did nearly as well in 1964 against Barry Goldwater. But voting analyst Kevin Phillips noticed what proved to be an important trend: In middle-class Catholic areas, especially in New York, Goldwater actually ran quite a bit better than Nixon. Hubert Humphrey carried the Catholic vote again in 1968, but by a much reduced margin. And beginning with George McGovern in 1972, Catholic loyalty to the Democrats would never again be quite the same.

For the last two decades or so, there has been more a "Catholic tendency" than a "Catholic vote." White Catholics are fairly consistently 10 to 15 points more Democratic than white Protestants, but on the whole, Catholics have voted pretty much as the rest of the country has. (The focus here is on white Catholics and white Protestants because African-Americans, Catholic and Protestant alike, are overwhelmingly Democratic. Jewish voters are consistently more Democratic than either Catholics or Protestants, usually backing Democrats by margins of 2-to-1 or better. Bill Clinton did especially well among Jewish voters in 1992.)

Looking at the most recent elections, white Catholics voted for Bill Clinton over George Bush by a 42 percent to 37 percent margin, with Ross Perot winning 22 percent. White Protestants voted for Bush 47 to 34 percent, with 19 percent going to Perot. This was one of the wider Catholic/Protestant differences in recent years—and the difference shrank back in the 1994 midterm elections: White Catholics voted for Republican House candidates by 55-

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graduates dropped by four points; it dropped by nine points among both high school graduates and those with some college education. But among white women who graduated from college, the Democratic share actually went up, albeit marginally, by two percentage points. Both Labor Secretary Robert Reich and Ruy Texeira, a political analyst at the Economic Policy Institute, pointed to these figures as demonstrating that the Democrats' 1994 defeat was largely the result of disaffection among Americans who are suffering in the new economy.

This analysis of the election, with its emphasis on the performance of government and the economy rather than on conservative ideology, feeds into the second large argument going on in the country. That argument is over what it is that most troubles us. Conservatives have a clear answer: The country is bothered by too much government and, above all, by a moral crisis. William Bennett put it very forcefully. "Our problem is not economic," he said in a speech to the Christian Coalition. "Our problems are moral, spiritual, philosophical, behavioral...crime, murder, divorce, drug use, births to unwed mothers, child abuse, casual cruelty and casual sex, and just plain trashy behavior."

The other view, put forth among liberals and the Left, is that the fundamental crisis is economic. It relates to the falling living standards of many in the middle and the economic catastrophe in the inner cities. What riles the country most, in this view, is that those who work hard and play by the rules have discovered that many of the rules have been repealed and that no one has let on what the new rules are. Many are working harder for less, as the president likes to say, and are understandably resentful. Technological change and the globalization of the economy have kicked out many of the supports for a middle-class standard of living. For very large numbers of people, there

to-44 percent; white Protestants went Republican by 64-to-34 percent (*see* chart).

Also striking is the fact that Catholic/Protestant differences vary sharply by region. Generally speaking, Catholics who still live in regions of the original immigration—i.e., the Northeast and Midwest—are more Democratic than Catholics in the South and West. Movement south and west seems to weaken the hold of the tradition that tied Catholics to the Democrats. Thus in 1992, Clinton enjoyed a 10-point margin over Bush among Catholics in the Northeast and an 8-point margin among Midwestern Catholics. But Southern Catholics voted for Bush by a 14-point margin, while Western Catholics gave Clinton a narrow 4-point edge. Roughly the same patterns held in 1994; there was a trend toward the Republicans among Catholics in all regions, but it was especially pronounced in the South and West.

It's also worth noting that Catholics are not only more Democratic in the Northeast and Midwest, they are also more distinctive in their voting behavior. In the Northeast and Midwest, white Catholics are quite a bit more Democratic than white Protestants. In the South, white Catholics are slightly more Democratic than white Protestants; the difference was especially small in 1992. In the West, Catholics and Protestants vote almost exactly the same way.

None of this is to suggest that the pollsters and politicians can now ignore whether someone is Catholic or Protestant. Catholic/Protestant differences still exist despite enormous social changes, and Catholics are, on the whole, more open to Democratic candidates than Protestants. It can be argued in particular that George Bush's decided weakness among Catholic voters in 1992 was an important reason for his defeat. But it's harder and harder to identify a "Catholic vote." And the more Catholics move up the class ladder and disperse to the South and West, the less distinctive Catholic voting behavior will be.

E.J. DIONNE, Jr.

THE CATHOLIC VOTE

NATIONAL RESULTS

1992	White Catholic	White Protestant
Clinton	42	34
Bush	37	47
Perot	22	19
Clinton Margin	+5	-13
1994 House Vote		
Democratic	44	34
Republican	55	64

REGIONAL RESULTS

1992	White Catholic				White Protestant			
	NE	**MW**	**S**	**W**	**NE**	**MW**	**S**	**W**
Clinton	44	43	34	40	34	35	30	39
Bush	34	35	48	36	47	46	53	37
Perot	22	22	18	24	19	19	17	23
Clinton Margin	+10	+8	-14	+4	-13	-9	-23	+2
1994 House Vote								
Democratic	46	46	42	34	34	36	33	34
Republican	51	53	57	64	64	63	66	63

1992 Results: Exit Polling by Voter Research and Surveys
1994 Results: Exit Polling by Voter News Service

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is no longer such a thing as what the Catholic church has called over the years "the family wage."

Traveling around the country during the 1992 campaign, what struck me and many of my colleagues in talking to voters was their anxiety over the impact of economics on their family lives. With both parents having to work, sometimes more than two jobs between them, they felt they were cheating their children. A great many felt they were being forced to choose between providing adequately for their family financially and having the time they needed to spend with their children. Increasingly, they were finding they could do one or the other but not both.

This second argument is central to the future because buying into one side or the other leads to quite different policies and approaches. My argument is that the resources of Catholic social thought could help prevent this argument from becoming a dialogue of the deaf. There is no way forward but to acknowledge both crises. The plain fact is that we will get nowhere if we deny that there is a very real, very troubling moral crisis in the country, a crisis that is indeed destructive to families and especially destructive to children. Anyone who cares about social justice must be concerned with the future of the family because one of the overwhelming forces increasing inequality and immiseration is the rise of fatherlessness. There can be no denying that if we don't figure out ways of putting parents and kids back together, most of the problems that everyone on all sides worries about will get much worse. It is also important to find new structures outside of government to help solve these problems. In the area of teen motherhood, the churches have played an enormously constructive role in trying to create shelters and what Progressive Policy Institute analyst Kathleen Sylvester has called "second chance homes" where teen mothers can live with their children in safe, supportive environments. More broadly, the churches can speak with a clarity and forcefulness about moral obligations and personal responsibility in a way that governments never can.

But the churches can do something else, and the Catholic bishops have done this with great courage: they can remind us that degrading economic circumstances can lead to a degradation of the moral climate. They can remind us in particular that there is no way to help the impoverished solve their own problems in the absence of money. It has been argued that by stepping into so many areas, the government has sapped the energies of private institutions to help the poor. Some government actions, indeed, may have undermined the sector of civil society, the churches, and voluntary institutions. Those policies must be reversed. But as my colleague Laurie Goodstein pointed out recently in the *Washington Post*, those who run the voluntary institutions organized by the churches fear that they would simply collapse under the pressure of huge new burdens if government withdrew large amounts of support for the poor. The costs of providing food and shelter and those second-chance homes are enormous. By all means let us be open to new ways of helping the poor and let us acknowledge the social catastrophes in our midst. But let us not pretend that simply having government walk away from these problems will lead to a miraculous solution. I believe in miracles, but I also believe God helps those who help themselves and we have to be willing to take responsibility for these problems.

Father Philip Murnion, director of the National Pastoral Life Center, offers a powerful insight from his own experience. After his dad died, Murnion's family was on welfare for several years. But it was, he noted, a very different time. Back then, there was a kind of triad that provided a foundation on which poor people could build themselves up. There was government to provide resources—cash. There was the family to provide love and nurture. And there was the church, with its authority to provide moral guidance. Now all three legs of the stool are in danger. There is family breakdown. The churches enjoy less authority than before. The money is still there, but it is now under threat. Murnion argues, and I think he's right, that we will not solve the problems that trouble us without paying attention to the need to strengthen all three supports.

I would add that we will also not solve these problems unless we take seriously the hugely disruptive effects of the economic changes we are passing through. The issue is not to stop technological change and the huge globalization process in its tracks. This is neither possible nor, in the long run, desirable. But periods such as this one of enormous economic change produce huge disruptions in the lives of families and communities, substantial new opportunities but also substantial problems. It seems to me that those who are doing well because of these transformations have a particular obligation to think about how they, how the community, and how the government can ease the burdens on those from whom this transition period is extracting the largest costs.

My conclusion about what awaits us in politics and public policy in the future is that a policy of laissez-faire, of pure hands-off or anemic government, will not finally satisfy the country because it will not deal with the underlying economic and moral crises so roiling us. But those who believe in something other than laissez-faire will not make their case successfully unless they acknowledge the personal and moral dimension of this problem to which William Bennett among others speaks so forcefully.

Robert McAfee Brown offered what I think is a brilliant insight on how the gospel speaks to us. The gospel "speaks different words to different times," he said, "and even different words to different participants in the same times." The church must indeed preach responsibility to fathers who abandon their families and to teen-agers contemplating the obligations of parenthood. It must teach the virtues of self-discipline, work, and perseverance. But it must also preach to those blessed with the world's riches about their responsibilities to their neighbors and their communities and their country, to the poorest among us. We have individual responsibilities. We also have social responsibilities. We cannot abandon either. We are called to be true to all our commitments. □

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CATHOLICS & THE 'RELIGIOUS RIGHT'

WE ARE BEING WOOED

GEORGE W. GERNER

Last September, weeks before the 1994 congressional elections, Christian Coalition President Pat Robertson addressed 3,000 cheering followers in Washington, D.C.: "We're seeing the Christian Coalition rise to where God intends it to be in this nation as one of the most powerful political forces....in the history of America." The coalition, Robertson asserted, reflects the moral values of "a mighty army" not only of 40 or 50 million evangelical Protestants, but of "30 to 40 million profamily Roman Catholics" as well.

This claim of moral alliance with what approximates the nation's total adult Roman Catholic population will strike many Catholics as inflated and highly improbable. After all, doesn't the "religious right" consist primarily of Protestant evangelicals, most of them Southern and rural, with a long history of virulent anti-Catholicism? Though Robertson's numbers are almost certainly inflated, a convergence of social interests across denominational lines is not as unlikely, on some issues, as theological differences might suggest.

Christian conservatism is an amalgam of the diverse. In a July 1994 *New York Times*/CBS national poll of 1,339 adults, 9 percent of the respondents identified themselves as members of the "religious right." Their profile contrasts sharply with the stereotype captured in the *Washington Post*'s 1993 characterization of politically conservative Christians as "poor, uneducated, and easy to command." The *Times*/CBS poll shows educational levels approximating the national average. Respondents were as likely to consider themselves Democrats as Republicans. Their positions on trip-wire issues, such as homosexuality and a school prayer amendment, were more conservative than those of the general population by about 20 percent. Although these 9 percent were overwhelmingly Protestant, only half considered themselves to be "evangelical, fundamentalist, or charismatic Christians," labels which many find pejorative. Many Catholics who share the "religious right's" political or moral convictions are likely to reject that label because of the stereotypes to which it is attached.

A 1994 Akron University Bliss Institute for Applied Politics survey found that 27 percent of the U.S. electorate sees itself "close" or "very close" to the religious right on particular issues. "Morally conservative" evangelicals, mainline Protestants, and Catholics account for half of the U.S. population. Whatever distinctions might be made about who is on the religious right, the survey data suggest that the reality of religious conservatism is larger and more varied than the label.

A 1994 *Newsweek* poll found that "the fraying of America's social fabric—once considered the crotchety preoccupation of the cultural right—has become a national (even a liberal) obsession" (*Newsweek*, June 13, 1994). Three of every four adults surveyed believe that the nation is in a moral and spiritual decline. Crime and drug abuse are of far greater concern to Americans than employment or health care. *Newsweek* proclaims a "craving for virtue" that transcends denominational lines. The religious right has provided one of the more coherent responses to this craving, especially among the 64 percent of American voters who say that religious values are "very important" in their lives (Gallup, 1992).

Catholics are among those to whom that message can and does appeal. On specific issues, such as education (tuition vouchers, sex education, condom distribution, school prayer), homosexuality, euthanasia, and abortion, the shared values of Catholics and politically conservative Christians seem clear. Professor William Dinges of The Catholic University of America, who has studied conservative Catholics, sees abortion as "the catalyst which has galvanized the trans-denominational right." The institutional right, in turn, sees the Catholic

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vote as a natural, if unfamiliar, potential ally, a massive prize worthy of its wooing.

No other organization on the religious right approaches the Christian Coalition in membership, media capability, political professionalism—or desire to reach the Catholic voter. Pat Robertson established the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) thirty-four years ago. It was the first TV network to devote more than half of its broadcast schedule to religious programming. The Family Channel, a 1972 CBN spinoff, is now the nation's tenth largest cable network and reaches 58 million American homes. Robertson's tabloid newspaper, *Christian American*, has a circulation of 270,000. By 1993, CBN annual revenues totaled $140 million, over half of which came from average daily contributions of $240,000. Robertson's International Family Entertainment holding company (in which he owns shares worth $50 million) earned 1993 revenues of $208 million and paid him a salary of $435,000.

Robertson founded the Christian Coalition in 1989, shortly after his costly ($22 million) but unsuccessful bid to win the 1988 Republican presidential nomination. He defeated George Bush in the Iowa caucus but placed a poor fourth on Super Tuesday. To himself and to others, however, he had clearly demonstrated the potency of the religious right and of his personal power over it. Coalition membership grew rapidly—57,000 in 1991 became 250,000 the following year, and 450,000 by 1993. Membership increased rapidly following Bill Clinton's election, and, by September 1994's Washington "Road to Victory" conference, Robertson claimed nearly 1.5 million contributing coalition members in some 900 chapters throughout the fifty states.

The Christian Coalition has become the dominant influence in more than a dozen state GOP organizations, largely in the South and the Midwest. Realizing that most national elections can be decided by 15 percent of potential voters who actually register for a given election (only 6 to 7 percent in local and state elections), the coalition has worked effectively to see that those who show up at the polls include a plurality of conservatives. Simply put, they are getting out the vote—selectively.

According to Akron University's Bliss Institute, an unprecedented 33 percent of voters in the November 1994 elections were white evangelical Christians, up from 18 percent two years earlier. More than two-thirds of these voted Republican. That increase was due in no small part to efforts by the Christian Coalition to register their constituency and get them out to vote. Among the results: twenty-five House races that would otherwise have seated Democrats were won by Republicans.

In the process of its steady advance, the coalition has put out the welcome mat to Catholics, and the threshold is being crossed. A Catholic approaching the Christian Coalition very quickly discovers that other Catholics have preceded him. A call to its Washington office is answered by secretary Connie Cavanaugh, cheerily efficient and Catholic. Referred to the officer in charge of Catholic Outreach, one is greeted by the unmistakably Boston accents of Gerry Giblin, Irish Catholic and 1955 graduate of Holy Cross College. Giblin, who retired from IBM after "thirty-plus" years and regularly attends a local Tridentine Mass, encountered the Christian Coalition two years ago at its national convention. Having concluded that "these people share my concerns," Giblin is now a four-day-per-week unpaid volunteer. His Washington predecessor, Marlene Elwell, also an active Catholic, is now the Coalition's executive director in Michigan.

Giblin speaks with satisfaction of "the success we had in the November 1994 elections." The Republican winners included at least forty-four anti-abortion congressional candidates in an election where only 18 percent of the voters said that they voted prolife. As for Catholic participation in the coalition, Giblin notes that 120 Catholic conferees attended Mass at the September "road to victory" conference, points to the active participation of the Legionaries of Christ, a religious order, and remarks that a Catholic priest offered the invocation at the conference's banquet. Major conference speakers included Michael Novak, the Reverend Richard Neuhaus, then-Pennsylvania Governor Robert Casey, and Paul Weyrich (who invented the term "Moral Majority," and designed for the Reverend Jerry Falwell the organization which bore that name). Panel participants included the Reverend Michael Scanlon, president of the Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio. Enthusiastic applause greeted coalition executive director Ralph Reed's statement, "I am proud to call myself an ally of Pope John Paul." Reed is a former political organizer for Jesse Helms.

The most detailed and theologically sophisticated statement of a Catholic-Evangelical alliance is "Evangelicals and Catholics Together—The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium." Signed on March 29, 1994, the declaration was the product of eighteen months' consultation between Catholics and evangelical Protestants initiated by the Reverend Richard Neuhaus (a recent convert to the Catholic church who edits *First Things* and heads the Institute on Religion and Public Life) and former White House aide Charles Colson (Prison Fellowship).

Neuhaus says that Vatican officials concurred in the project. Among Catholic formulators and endorsers are Cardinal John O'Connor (New York), Bishop Francis George (Yakima), Monsignor William Murphy (chancellor, Boston), Archbishop Francis Stafford (Denver), Bishop Carlos Sevilla (San Francisco), and Avery Dulles, S.J. Also endorsing the declarations were senior faculty members of The Catholic University of America, Boston College, Fordham, Notre Dame, and Saint Louis Universities, plus well-known neoconservatives George Weigel (Ethics and Public Policy Center) and Michael Novak (American Enterprise Institute). Giblin refers to the declaration as a "document of understanding" between Pat Robertson and Cardinal John O'Connor.

Among other issues, the declaration resolves "to enact the most protective laws and public policies that are politically possible...to reduce dramatically the incidence of abortion"; to oppose euthanasia; to seek transmission in public education of "our cultural heritage, which is inseparable from the influence of religion"; to work for "parental choice" in publicly-supported education; and to oppose pornography. The declaration calls

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for "renewed appreciation of Western culture," noting that "commonly, today, multiculturalism means all cultures but our own."

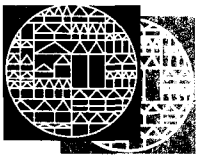
The declaration shows the convergence of Catholics and Evangelicals on certain moral and social issues. But, according to Michael Russell at the Christian Coalition's Virginia Beach headquarters, the major vehicle for joint action with Roman Catholics at the institutional level has been the Coalition's voter guides. The coalition spent $2 million distributing 33 million such guides via 60,000 churches of many denominations around the country for the November 1994 elections. As "educational" guides, this $2 million expenditure did not require reporting to the Federal Elections Commission.

The voter guides present single-phrase statements of complex problems with one-word ("supports/opposes") comparisons of candidate positions on issues of concern to the Coalition. Although explicitly denying endorsement of any candidate, the guides make choices simple and obvious. The liberal People for the American Way sees them as devastatingly effective: 60 percent of all candidates strongly supported by the religious right in November 1994 won their races. (Not all candidates endorsed by the Christian Coalition sought its endorsement.)

Faced by what they see as compelling moral issues in political campaigns, some Catholic bishops or their chancery staffs have found the Christian Coalition's ready-made guides an efficient distribution system for marshaling the Catholic vote.

The New York City School Board elections of May 4, 1993, was such an occasion. At stake were 288 unpaid community school board seats. Key issues in the election included school-based condom distribution without parental consent and, in the primary schools, the Rainbow Curriculum's sympathetic treatment of homosexuals. In what the *New York Times* labeled "a tactical alliance" between the Christian Coalition and the Archdiocese of New York, the Family Life Office of the archdiocese announced in April that it would allow distribution of 100,000 Christian Coalition-prepared voter guides through its 213 parishes in Manhattan, Staten Island, and the Bronx. (Across the East River, the Brooklyn diocese refused a similar arrangement.) More than half a million voter guides were distributed to over 2,000 New York City churches and synagogues. Fifty-one percent of the coalition-backed candidates were elected.

Even among those Catholics who would not question the appropriateness of diocesan guidance on election issues, there is concern about the ethical character of such actions. Perhaps the most dramatic example of the emerging alliance occurred across the Potomac from the Christian Coalition's Capitol Hill office. The Diocese of Arlington, Virginia, is among the nation's most conservative. As the November 1994 elections approached, the diocese's 270,000 Catholics (13 percent of the population) became a potentially significant factor in one of the most highly contested and nationally significant senatorial races: Republican Oliver North against incumbent Democrat Senator Charles Robb. North, a charismatic Episcopalian, made his religious beliefs a central feature of his campaign.



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Having supplied North with indispensable help in winning the GOP nomination, the Christian Coalition actively backed him in his $16.8 million campaign, the second most heavily funded in the nation.

Enter Gerry Giblin's Christian Coalition "Catholic Outreach." In June, four months before the elections, Giblin held a luncheon at which some eight Arlington diocese priests, including the diocese's former vicar general, Monsignor Richard Burke, met with Ralph Reed. Shortly before, Catholic layman Frank Nassetta (a quietly effective federal retiree and father of an Arlington priest) had joined the Christian Coalition. When Nassetta sought diocesan approval for parish distribution of the Coalition's voter guide, Chancellor Robert Rippy anticipated resistance if the guides were presented solely as a Pat Robertson product. Within weeks and with the "blessing of the diocese" was born the League of Catholic Voters, which met for the first time in August 1994—just two months before the elections.

With the prospect of a jointly sponsored voter guide, Nassetta says, the Arlington chancery concurred in its distribution, subject to approval by parish pastors. On November 3, the 47,000-circulation diocesan newspaper, the *Arlington Catholic Herald*, published a full-page "voter guide" attributed jointly to the "League of Catholic Voters and the Christian Coalition." Although the fine print says that the guide's publication was "paid for and authorized by the Christian Coalition," the coalition's Washington office says and the *Herald*'s editor confirms that no payment was made.

The *Herald*'s publication of the voter guide "opened doors," according to Nassetta. Pastors who had previously refused distribution of the guides now agreed. On Sunday, November 6, 30,000 voter guides were distributed at some twenty of sixty Arlington parishes, mostly in the Northern Virginia metropolitan area where support for North was weakest. Lacking pastors' permission elsewhere, Christian Coalition volunteers distributed the guide anyway outside Masses on Sunday.

Several ethical questions arise from these actions:

● Although their stated purpose is "educational," the voter guide's selection of issues and the minimal descriptions of the candidates' positions are skillfully designed to lead to a specific partisan choice. Does this constitute "education" or endorsement? If the latter, it could threaten diocesan and parish tax-exempt status. According to Deacon Chris Baumann of the NCCB, dioceses and parishes engaging in such activity "could be on thin ground."

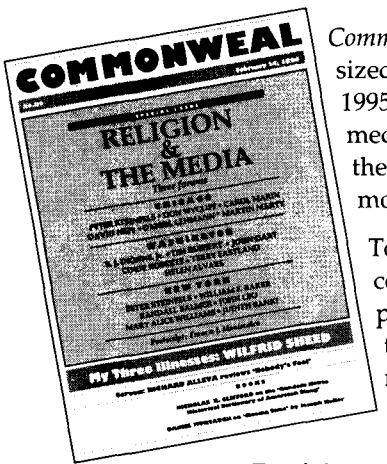
● Characterizations of Senator Robb's positions were inaccurate and misleading. In response to my query, Ms. Peggy Willhide, Robb's press secretary, documented numerous examples, ranging from misleadingly incomplete to false. (For example, contrary to the guide's claim, Robb favors voluntary school prayer.) Do diocesan officials not have an obligation to ensure the accuracy of factual assertions in the guidelines when published in the diocesan newspaper?

● Distribution of the voter guides only days before the election made any response by misrepresented candidates nearly impossible. Such timing reportedly accords with Christian Coalition guidance. Doesn't this belie the educational, nonpartisan purpose of voter guides?

● Publication of voter guides like those of the Christian Coalition by diocesan newspapers and their distribution through parishes and/or by groups bearing a diocesan "blessing" seem to imply their endorsement by the local church. Does this accord with accepted church practice?

Professor Daniel Cowdin, who teaches social ethics at The Catholic University, says that it does not: "Simplistic caricaturing by the Christian right is fundamentally at odds with the methods of Catholic social teaching. It is disrespectful of the autonomy of its audience. At its best, the Catholic social tradition has been much more sophisticated than that. It preach-

Religion & the Media



Commonweal's double-sized issue (February 24, 1995) on religion and the media defines the state of the issue—at least for the moment.

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es issues of doctrine but leaves applications to the practical judgment of the laity—it does not load the dice."

Oliver North narrowly lost to Senator Robb in November (43 percent to 46 percent). However, in spite of one of the largest turnouts in the nation, one-quarter of Virgina voters identified themselves in exit polls as "religiously active, born-again Christians." They voted 57 percent for North and only 37 percent for Robb. As Ralph Reed concluded, "We turned out our vote, and it was overwhelmingly for North." Black voters overwhelmingly favored Robb. Among white voters in an exit poll for news organizations by Mitofsky International the following breakdown was reported:

	Robb	North	Coleman
Protestants	37	49	14
Catholics	42	47	11
Jews	75	21	4

For most of this century, American Catholics have been consistently more politically liberal than Protestants. However, a gradual conservative trend is discernible in the politics of U.S. Catholics. For Professor Dinges of The Catholic University, this is a by-product of Catholic upward mobility. Larger numbers of educated and affluent Catholics have "produced a class transformation that leads inevitably to more of them voting Republican," he argues.

Within the Catholic hierarchy, the trend toward political as well as theological conservatism is even clearer than among the laity. Professor Cowdin observes, "Catholic social thought from World War II through the pontificate of Paul VI was on a trajectory somewhat left of center." This changed with John Paul II, whose encyclical, *Centesimus annus*, served as a rallying point for Catholic conservatives in the same way that John XXIII's *Mater et magistra* did for Catholic liberals thirty years earlier. *Centesimus annus*, in Cowdin's view, "led to an easier merging of Catholic attitudes with those of the religious right."

Constituting nearly one-third of the national electorate, American Catholics were part of the strong swing to the right in the November 1994 congressional elections [*see*, *Commonweal*, January 13, 1995]. For the first time in recent history, more Catholics voted Republican than Democrat in an off-year election. There are now nearly as many Republican Catholics in the House of Representatives as Democratic Catholics. University of Notre Dame political scientist David Legee sees this as a phenomenon unique to this election and not a permanent change in Catholic voting patterns. Representative Peter T. King, prolife New York Republican, attributed last November's Catholic conservative swing to "the cultural gap between Bill Clinton and the traditional Irish and Italian Catholics."

As dramatic as the national swing to the right was in November 1994, Catholic laity are still not as conservative as other American Christians. Exit polls by Voter News and Surveys show that 55 percent of Catholics voted Republican compared to 66 percent of other American Christians. The Catholic contrast is even greater with the 5 percent of total voters who identified themselves as members of the "religious right," 90 percent of whom voted Republican in November.

With the exception of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops/US Catholic Conference (NCCB/USCC), no Catholic organization approaches the size, sophistication, or political effectiveness of the Christian Coalition or Dr. James Dobson's Colorado-headquartered Focus on the Family. "The Religious Right," a study published in 1994 by the Anti-Defamation League, listed no Catholic organizations and found "as-yet limited public interaction between Catholic and evangelical organizations and differences in strategy, rhetoric, and impact." USCC's Media Relations officer, Bill Ryan, says that the USCC has "very little" contact with the Christian Coalition.

Although a few conservative Catholic groups have achieved some impact upon specific issues, such as "right to life," most are of nominal consequence in national politics. Professor Cowdin sees that as consistent with Catholic social practice. "The Catholic social encyclical tradition has no constituency. It is not a living tradition in terms of grassroots organizations. Unlike the Christian Coalition, it has not focused on the nuts and bolts of social effectiveness. There's a vacuum there, and that's part of the reason why some Catholics have been flowing into the religious right. The church has not offered them something at a parallel level."

That is what brought Gerry Giblin to the Christian Coalition. "It's a grassroots thing. People like myself and other Catholics, we're disappointed with the bishops. They verbalize, but they don't do much to get the vote out. The K. of C., Knights of Malta, Holy Name Society—they're not doing it either." Giblin seeks new channels to cooperation with conservative Catholics who, like himself, wish to "make a difference."

Clearly, the Christian Coalition is building these channels. Despite important theological and historical differences between Catholics and Evangelicals, the Coalition shares some common ground with the social and moral teachings of the Catholic church. In the current political environment, its efforts to enlist Catholics will probably meet with a degree of success.

Such inroads, however, are likely to be greater in some diocesan chancery offices than among the mass of U.S. Catholics. The laity's persisting liberalism and the widening divergence of their experience from a theologically and politically more conservative hierarchy are certainly among the factors. Any continuing Catholic evolution toward the political right will more likely come "from above" than "from below." It will probably be of limited degree and gradual pace, reflecting the continuing upward mobility of Catholics. As the new conservative ascendancy in Washington moderates its stand on abortion and cuts budgets for a variety of social programs, historical fissures between political conservatism and traditional Catholic liberalism are likely to reemerge. Witness Speaker Newt Gingrich's March 14 removal of an anti-abortion amendment from the budget reduction bill and the severe USCC criticism of the Republican welfare reform plan four days later.

Catholic impact upon the religious right will probably con-

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tinue to come from active volunteers like Giblin as well as scholars and intellectuals. Catholics tend to be (or at least think they are) more cerebral than Evangelicals in their social theology. Few are likely to confuse Pat Robertson with Karl Rahner. Catholics such as Patrick Buchanan, William Bennett, Richard Neuhaus, Michael Novak, and George Weigel will continue to be ready donors of intellectual substance to the needy religious right. But the religious right's wooing of the Catholic electorate is likely to remain a rather one-sided courtship. □

SCREEN

DEAREST MOMMY

'DOLORES CLAIBORNE'

The eponymous heroine of *Dolores Claiborne* (Kathy Bates), implicated two decades ago in the murder of her husband but never charged, is now suspected of bumping off her long-time employer, a wealthy widow. While a vindictive police detective (Christopher Plummer) gathers evidence, the former housekeeper is taken in hand by her reluctantly dutiful daughter, Selena (Jennifer Jason-Leigh), and the two temporarily cohabit in their ramshackle former home on an island off the coast of Maine. Igniting painful memories in each other, the two women snipe at each other, occasionally collide, finally bond.

This story has possibilities; the treatment snuffs them out.

There is no suspense whatsoever. Not for one second does Dolores seem capable of evil, and so, as this two-hour movie unfolds, we simply wait for her inevitable vindication, which, of course, must be accomplished by Selena in order to justify the concluding reconciliation. Whenever our sympathy for Dolores falters for even a nanosecond, one of three things immediately happens: (1) Kathy Bates gives her estranged daughter a look of infinitely yearning maternal love; (2) Christopher Plummer, all velvet-voiced menace and sneering aquiline features, materializes to torment mother or daughter or both; (3) some local slithers into view to jeer, "Who'd ya kill today, Dolores?" This dramatic deck-stacking not only weakens the movie as melodrama but kills its potential as character-study, too. If Dolores has no shadows in her character but is only and perpetually a righteous victim, what real drama can emerge from the mother-daughter confrontation of the past?

None, but there is certainly no dearth of issues on screen. All the predictable, TV magazine-worthy hot topics strut their stuff: wife beating, child abuse, incest, repressed memories, recovered memories. The filmmakers—director Taylor Hackford and scriptwriter Tony Gilroy (adapting Stephen King's novel)—use these issues not to achieve insight but merely to press our buttons. Yet, despite its topicality, the film is dull because the storytelling is lame and the filmmaking is boring.

I don't know what Stephen King made of his yarn in print, but on screen it comes across as sheer hokum. For instance, a hole on the Claiborne property, so deep that it threatens to drop a body into at least the first circle of Dante's Hell, goes undiscovered for years until Dolores finds it just in time to solve a certain problem. Mr. Claiborne successfully hides his wife beating from his daughter for her entire childhood, even though he's constantly falling-down drunk and not too bright even when he's sober. (Nor is this a case of Selena's repressed memory, which is reserved for other matters.)

As for the filmmaking: let present-day Dolores tell her daughter to enter the house and a jump-cut will show us the Dolores of twenty years past telling the child Selena to step inside. Let Selena spot an article of furniture from her girlhood and her juvenile self will walk into the same shot to sit on it. It's no longer fashionable for moviemakers to use Vaseline-coated close-ups to introduce narrated flashbacks ("It was then that I remembered those forever-lost days of horse-drawn carriages and suitors at the door..."), but the newest device, already made familiar by TV shows such as "Thirty Something" and "Sisters," of letting youthful versions of the characters share the same shot with their older selves (present tense in the foreground, the past in the back) is just as corny when it's employed as mechanically as the director uses it here.

Jennifer Jason-Leigh, a frowning face under schoolgirl bangs, jabs a cigarette in and out of her mouth and furtively studies the ground. Those aren't the salient features of her performance; they are the only features. Christopher Plummer, an actor of genius, executes plummy vocal tricks to pick up his paycheck. David Straithern, who usually serves up interesting, layered work, makes the husband a one-dimensional lout. The best performance is by Kathy Bates. This actress has inalienable force and dignity, and, in the flashbacks, becomes younger amazingly without much reliance on make-up.

What makes this film particularly off-putting is a spurious feminism of which only male filmmakers are capable. When Dolores's hitherto infuriating boss, a wealthy widow who probably murdered her own (adulterous) husband, learns of her housekeeper's domestic travails, instant bonding takes place. Extreme close-ups of the women's eyes are meant to suggest the Eternal Sisterhood that transcends class barriers or financial brackets. Prompted by this beneficiary of mariticide, Dolores engineers the demise of her husband during an eclipse which the director stages as the collaboration of Mother Nature with a sinned-against female. And when Dolores's daughter (another woman betrayed by the slimy male in her life) rallies to her mother's cause, she tries to defuse the charge of murdering the widow by emphasizing that "these women loved each other." And all three women share the wisdom that—I paraphrase—in a world of men, being a bitch isn't such a bad thing.

And, in a world of male moviemaking run by male studio heads to the profit of conglomerates run by male millionaires, it isn't such a bad thing to create movies spiked with a little feminist mysticism. It costs you nothing, may earn you brownie points with liberal critics, and will make the pointy-headed earthmothers in your audiences sigh with delight. At any rate, it's a lot easier than putting memorable female characters up there on the screen.

RICHARD ALLEVA

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Suit your various selves

SEX AND SUITS
The Evolution of Modern Dress
Anne Hollander
Alfred A. Knopf, $25, 212 pp.

THE EMPIRE OF FASHION
Dressing Modern Democracy
Gilles Lipovetsky; translated by Catherine Porter
Princeton University Press, 24.95, 276 pp.

James T. Fisher

"Style is coming back in style." So goes the refrain from the old Jerry Lieber-Mike Stoller tune that sets the tone for Robert Altman's film, *Ready to Wear*, a comedic look at the world of Parisian *haute couture*. If *Sex and Suits* and *The Empire of Fashion* are any indication, scholarly studies of a topic long deemed frivolous are coming into style as well.

Anne Hollander and Gilles Lipovetsky both argue that a "fashion system" designed to encode gender distinctions emerged from the late Middle Ages. But where Lipovetsky—a French philosopher—links the modern "reign of fashion" to "cultural values that find their apotheosis in the democratic state," Anne Hollander is primarily interested in the fabric of fashion itself, in the look and feel of clothing through time, especially the tailored men's suit, which she exalts as "relentlessly modern, in the best classic sense."

Hollander waxes ecstatic in her descriptions of men's fashion, whose persistent modernism "has always made it inherently more desirable than female dress." The classic male suit as we know it began to appear in the late seventeenth century. By 1800, Hollander writes, "the rough coat of dull cloth was gradually refined into an exquisitely balanced garment that fitted smoothly without wrinkles and buttoned without strain, to clothe what appeared to be the torso of a Greek athlete."

Hollander's rather idiosyncratic aesthetic philosophy is rooted in an ideal of the classic male form that the modern suit—that "perfect envelope"—has actually improved upon by presenting "the impression that the nude hero was even more natural when dressed." Hollander has invented a school that could perhaps be dubbed "Seventh Avenue Platonism." While men would achieve harmony with the aesthetic ideal (authentic fashion in the classic sense), women were subject first to a trivializing world of "'Fashion'...never originally attributed to male tyranny, even by women, but to female idiocy," and then, in the age of *haute couture*, to male designers who "created" women as the embodiment of men's sexual fantasies. Only when "the social agreements and sexual fantasies of men and women changed their terms" in this century could women seek to emulate the classical ideal in dress.

Sex and Suits diverges dramatically from that contemporary feminist criticism which locates the male "gaze" at the heart of a system of gender oppression enslaving women to "fashion." Hollander turns the look around and argues that fashion is "a force with its own will, something that the collective desire of Western people brought into existence so that it might have an independent life." *Sex and Suits* is ultimately concerned with a free-floating erotic desire for the perfect form of clothed appearance that Hollander seems to view as some primal engine of culture. While she might not appreciate the comparison, her argument is reminiscent of Camille Paglia's *Sexual Personae*, which forcefully estranged the aesthetics of sexuality from the social and economic contexts established by generations of less lyrically minded scholars.

Gilles Lipovetsky is similarly committed to a view of fashion as a potent cultural force that demands to be analyzed apart from "the heavy artillery of social class, from the dialectic of social distinc-

"You've come a long way, Harry."

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tion and class pretensions." But where *Sex and Suits* is replete with minute details from the history of clothing, Lipovetsky paradoxically argues, in *The Empire of Fashion*, that a broadly abstract concept of "fashion" undergirds the fulfillment of democratic individualism in Western societies. "The first major mechanism for the consistent social production of personality on display," he writes, "fashion has aestheticized and individualized human vanity; it has succeeded in turning the superficial into an instrument of salvation, a goal of existence."

In contrast to Hollander, Lipovetsky argues that "modern fashion is feminine in essence." But he shares her conviction that the reign of fashion represents a genuine desire for personal and creative freedom that cannot simply be manipulated. Even the dominant *couturiers* of the past century could only program fashion "while remaining unable to impose it." An obsession with fashion makes for better citizens, claims Lipovetsky, because its emphasis on novelty and change fosters "a new type of kinetic, open personality" most valued in a consumerist democracy. Lipovetsky even argues that "consummate fashion also helps detach human beings from objects" because in a culture of commodities we freely replace goods that lose their utility: far from being mere emblems of status anxiety, the products of fashion serve to fulfill those individualist personalities maturing democracies depend upon. "How can we continue to talk about alienation," he concludes, "at a time when, far from being dispossessed by objects, individuals are dispossessing themselves of objects?"

The Empire of Fashion will not come as news to students of recent American cultural history. Beginning in the late 1970s such ex-leftist scholars as Warren Susman began to champion the "culture of personality" and conceded that democratic capitalism had made good on most of its promises for the masses of Americans. Lipovetsky is one of the "new French philosophers" whose works are being introduced to American audiences with some fanfare by a Princeton University Press series that includes *The Empire of Fashion*. These "new" thinkers promoted "the effort to conceptualize the individual," which may not sound like much until one considers their immediate intellectual antecedents, including Michel Foucault, whose baleful influence continues to be felt in the U.S., if not in France. Foucault thought the notion of individualism was rendered meaningless in the triumph of totalitarian bureaucracies and such instruments as advertising. Lipovetsky counters that "advertising does nothing of the sort. In place of hit or miss coercion there is communication; in place of regimented rigidity there is seduction; in place of mechanistic training there is playful entertainment."

Both *Sex and Suits* and *The Empire of Fashion* remain vulnerable to charges they elevate the trivial to the level of metaphysics. Hollander's tone is so devoutly upper-class and Anglophilic (the nineteenth-century English country gentleman remains her paragon of fashion), she might be properly deemed a restorationist in matters of grooming. And while Lipovetsky rehearses many of the caveats first raised by Alexis de Tocqueville (who has apparently been only recently rediscovered in his native land) concerning the dangers of mass taste in a democracy, he tends to exaggerate—like so many born-again democratic intellectuals—the salvific potential of popular culture. In *Ready to Wear* Robert Altman (whose films, the British scholar Paul Giles argues, bear strong traces of the *auteur*'s "residual Catholicism") has his mavens of fashion continually stepping in organic matter as a counterpoint to their enchantment with artifice. Hollander and Lipovetsky could use a dose of Altman's irreverence toward the religion of fashion. □

STEVENSON TRANSMOGRIFIED

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON
A Biography
Frank McLynn
Random House, $30, 567 pp.

Suzanne Keen

Robert Louis Stevenson had a brief but fascinating life (1850-94). The son of an eminent lighthouse engineer, Stevenson was an only child who remained financially dependent upon his father throughout his life. His Calvinist nurse "Cummy" terrorized him with tales of hellfire and damnation and dinned into his head the Bible, Scots metrical psalms, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*. Not surprisingly, Stevenson suffered from nightmares. Sickly from childhood, he spent most of his adult life trying to find a place to live where he would feel well. He had a bronchial condition like tuberculosis which made him choke and hemorrhage, and turned ordinary colds and exhaustion into life-threatening illnesses.

Despite this disability, Stevenson was remarkably prolific. Between 1881 and 1886 he published *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped*, and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, works which made him famous and, along with the financial backing of his father, made it possible for him to live an independent life as a writer. In 1888 Stevenson took advantage of this freedom to remove his extended family to the Pacific, where he settled (in Samoa) enjoying somewhat better health until he died of a brain hemorrhage.

One of the best effects reading a biography of a writer can have is to remind us of books we read a long time ago and loved, and to inspire us to find those works that we've never gotten around to reading, such as *The Weir of Hermiston*, "The Beach of Falesa," *The Wrong Box*, *The Wrecker*, and *The Ebb-Tide* (the last three written in collaboration with his stepson Lloyd Osbourne). Frank McLynn's biography does make me want to read more Stevenson, and perhaps Stevenson's let-

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ters, in order to rescue this fine author from the sticky web of cliché and partisan defensiveness with which McLynn coats him.

McLynn begins with a lucid summary of the reasons Stevenson's reputation has suffered in the century since his death: early hagiographies brought on a backlash of debunking criticism; some critics have objected to Stevenson's stylish prose, as if this demonstrated the emptiness of his fiction; others have imagined that the adventure story Stevenson excelled at writing could not be serious fiction; readers have contributed by thinking of Stevenson as an author of stories for boys; and finally, Stevenson's own adventurous life has overshadowed his works. A tone of ardent defense permeates this biography, but the story McLynn tells does not revolve around the five points he raises in the introduction. McLynn's literary criticism is at best workmanlike, and he perhaps unwittingly contributes to the elevation of the life over the works by investing so much in the description of the Stevensons' sea voyages (nearly half the book—and indeed the better part of the book—focuses on the Pacific wanderings and the brief years in Samoa). Clearly, McLynn loves Stevenson's fiction, but his tepid Freudianism illuminates neither the life nor the work.

The real arguments of this biography concern Stevenson's personal life. McLynn argues that Stevenson engaged in an oedipal struggle with his father, Thomas Stevenson; that his strength and resources were sapped by his extended family, the Osbournes (Stevenson was childless); that his literary reputation suffered through his collaboration with his stepson; and worst of all, that he was married to a loony American hypochondriac who, contrary to legend, did not nurse him when he was sick, but fell ill herself out of competitive, selfish spite.

Despite McLynn's animosity toward her, Stevenson's wife, Fanny Osbourne, is by far the most interesting secondary figure in this biography. According to McLynn, she can do nothing right: he mocks her literary aspirations; sneers at her illnesses; doubts her clairvoyance (though Pacific islanders who have prophetic dreams are treated respectfully); blames her for the extended family who attach themselves to the Stevenson gravy-train; and rebukes her for keeping people with colds away from her susceptible husband. McLynn's mystifying hostility toward Fanny becomes most repellent when she succumbs temporarily to mental illness—he blames her not only for her madness, but for inconveniencing his hero. Fanny indeed seems to have been a difficult person, but McLynn's treatment of her does not mesh with Stevenson's evident affection for his wife.

This is not an easy book to read, despite the unusual life it narrates. McLynn's analysis operates by means of crudely applied commonplaces: an early love affair "catches fire" despite the woman's attempt to "lower the temperature"; Jekyll and Hyde set the pattern for countless sightings of "divisions within" Stevenson; a family fight is like a storm. Overblown metaphor leads to unintended bathos, and in worse cases McLynn does not sustain

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his metaphors. We read that Stevenson "stonewalled [Fanny Sitwell] with bromides" and "*soothed* ruffled feathers." In an account of the feud with Henley over Fanny's plagiarism of a story, McLynn writes: "RLS concluded that Henley was refusing to reply to him and that the gloves were off for a bare-knuckle fight. Ascertaining the full facts in a case was never Stevenson's strong suit: he liked to shoot from the hip and work through the fine detail later. So he dashed off a letter to Henley."

The costume changes required of the reader hoping to make this sequence coherent—from boxing ring to OK Corral to writing desk—suggest the effort it takes to read McLynn's prose. His copy editor has not done him any favors. He often misuses words in a puffed-up way ("differential" for "different") and his repetition of one word in particular creates a little drama of its own. Perhaps McLynn means to allude to the transformation of Dr. Jekyll into Mr. Hyde, or perhaps he simply loves the word, but he uses forms of the verb "to transmogrify" eleven times in this book. Twice would be noticeable; thrice inadvisable; but at this rate the reader only has to be alerted to some change, alteration, turn-about, or shift in the story to know, with grim certainty, that "transmogrification" cannot be far behind. When we learn that Stevenson, rebuffed by his first love Fanny Sitwell, "simply converted her from a potential mistress into a mother figure," we await with bated breath "the transmogrification of Fanny from object of desire to sacred mother object." Stevenson deserves better than this. □

HOW WE GOT HELL

THE FORMATION OF HELL
Death and Retribution in the Ancient and Early Christian Worlds
Alan E. Bernstein
Cornell University Press, $32.95, 391 pp.

THE DEVIL IN THE NEW WORLD
The Impact of Diabolism in New Spain
Fernando Cervantes
Yale University Press, $22.50, 182 pp.

Carl L. Bankston III

Evil and divine retribution are uncomfortable topics for modern Christians. We prefer to see the former as a product of bureaucratic banality or improper socialization and the latter has been all but abandoned as a subject of sermons by even the wildest TV preachers. How is it, then, that such unpleasant themes as hell and the devil have played such a big part in the historical development of Christianity?

Alan Bernstein argues that the Christian Hell was shaped by views about death, the afterlife, and justice held by a variety of Mediterranean societies, with Greco-Roman and Jewish antiquity exercising the greatest and most immediate influences. Approaches to death in both of these societies maintained a tension between "neutral death," the afterlife as a morally undifferentiated repository of human shades, and "moral death," the afterlife as punishment or reward for earthly deeds.

To provide a background to the Christian "moral death," Bernstein guides readers on a tour of Greek, Roman, and Jewish thinking about what happens to people after they stop walking on the surface of the earth. His classical sources will be familiar to anyone who bothered to take the classics and ancient history classes that most universities have ceased to require. Jewish ideas on the next world were often parallel to Greco-Roman ideas, a convenient phenomenon for the translators of the Septuagint and for Saint Jerome.

I found Bernstein's close reading of the Hebrew Bible and of the Book of Enoch, the major piece of evidence outside the writings of Josephus of a late antique Jewish belief in punishment after death, more original than his review of Greco-Roman ideas. Much of the latter seems to rest on scholarly interpretations that have long been common currency. This may be a matter of familiarity, however, and Bernstein does bring together a great deal of material in a highly readable style, so that almost anyone will find some new ideas and information in the collection of pre-Christian beliefs assembled here.

Although the Christian message was, from the beginning, concerned primarily with eternal life, the theme of eternal punishment emerged from apocalyptic Judaism in the pages of the New Testament. Bernstein's reading of the New Testament, however, indicates a diversity of understandings of this punishment among the authors of the Scriptures. Saint Paul, emphasizing the positive teachings of the faith, did not express a clear vision of hell and seems to have implied that the wicked would eventually simply disappear. The authors of the synoptic Gospels, by contrast, describe pains of eternal damnation that balance the joys of eternal salvation.

The Fathers of the church could interpret life after death from a variety of perspectives. Origen, perhaps the most original, argued for eventual universal salvation, following tutelary reincarnations that would eventually lead all beings back to the Neoplatonic One. Augustine expressed the dominant position in the church when he described symmetrical states of eternal suffering for the damned and eternal bliss for the saved.

It is only in discussing this last devel-

REVIEWERS

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WINNIFRED FALLERS SULLIVAN *is assistant professor of religion at Washington & Lee University and the author of* Paying the Words Extra: Religious Discourse in the Supreme Court of the United States *(Harvard University Center for the Study of World Religions, 1994).*

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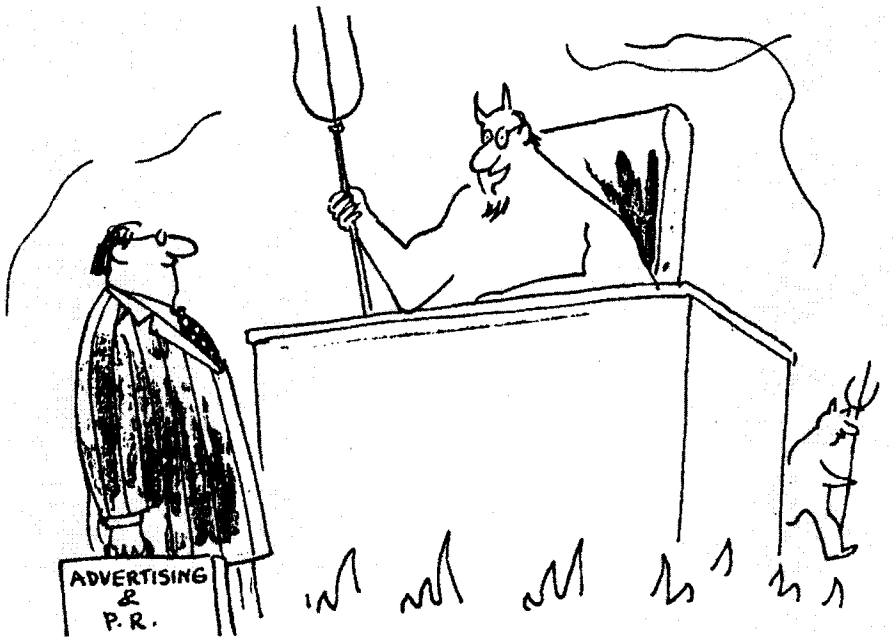
opment, the acceptance of the view of symmetrical judgment by Augustine and other Christian writers, that Bernstein deals in even a tentative way with the issue of causation. He suggests that the need to achieve uniformity within the religion that had become the official belief system of the Roman world and the example of the Roman judicial system helped to promote the divide-and-judge model of the afterlife. Elsewhere in the book, there is no attempt to ask how social structures might have affected perspectives on death. There is also little effort to deal with specific questions of intellectual influence, so that we never know just how Hebrew or Greco-Roman sources led to the creation of early Christian theology; we are left with the image of a lot of ideas and myths simply floating around in the air of antiquity to be absorbed by converts to a new religion.



"Our governing board decided we'd like to start a general audience magazine about hell, and have a membership drive."

Skip a thousand years and we find that Augustine's heirs are exporting their beliefs to a new world and that the Prince of the Damned has assumed a central position in issues of damnation. Fernando Cervantes takes up this theological thread in the history of ideas, examining the role of demonology in the spiritual conquest of New Spain. Cervantes explores how Amerindians were demonized by early missionaries, how the Amerindians responded to this demonization, and how the devil gradually lost his hold on the collective imagination of a Christianized New World.

The Conquistadors saw the people of the major American societies as fairly civilized humans, and even worthy of respect in many ways, although this respect did not interfere with the business of pillage. By the mid-sixteenth century, though, the natives had become children of Satan in Spanish eyes and the native religions had become forms of Satanic idolatry. Cervantes argues that the early modern fascination with the devil was the result of a reaction, particularly notable among the Franciscans, against the medieval Thomist union of nature and grace in a single rational Aristotelian chain. The Franciscan nominalists portrayed God as a free agent rather than as an "unmoved mover" restricted in action by his position in a cosmos determined by reason. This nominalist elevation of the supernatural enhanced the role of the demonic, as well as the divine, in early modern European minds, causing even such astute students of Amerindian civilizations as Jose de Acosta to interpret all non-Christian religious activities and beliefs as manifestations of Christ's supernatural challenger.

From an anthropological perspective, one of the most interesting parts of Cervantes's book is his description of the native reaction to this demonization. The gods of the Aztecs, Mayans, and other native peoples were powers capable of both good and evil, rather than absolute principles of light and darkness. So the Amerindians, even when they continued pre-Christian religious practices, often tended to accept the identification of the old deities with the Satanic, seeing Satan simply as a spiritual alternative. Filtering all religious acts through the liturgical vocabulary of the new faith, however, tended ultimately to lead to a new, Christianized unity of beliefs.

In the end, according to Cervantes, early modern diabolism was undermined by its own presuppositions about the relationship of creator and creation. Seeing the devil in every strange act seemed to vulgarize the supernatural power. Cervantes shows, through citing colorful cases of alleged possession, how inquisitors became increasingly suspicious of charges of demonic activity.

This interpretation of early modern demonology is intriguing, but suggesting that changes in worldview may result from changes in theology seems to reverse the logical order of influence. Cervantes makes a good case for seeing demonology as related to the tendency to separate mind from nature. But both of these phenomena stem from the broader social and historical patterns that shape human interpretations of the natural and supernatural.

Bernstein and Cervantes have produced fascinating and insightful books, well worth the time of any serious reader, but ultimately they suffer from a common weakness of intellectual historians. They tend to treat ideas as independent of the societies that produce them, so that history becomes a set of disembodied intellectual formulations. These formulations may be shown as influencing human behavior, by leading perhaps to intolerance for schismatic views on damnation or to rises and declines in exorcism, but they are rarely understood as interpretive reactions to social environments. These books have made progress in drawing the shifting historical picture of evil, but many vital features have yet to be filled in, and some of the lines may need to be redrawn. □

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JURY IN THE DOCK

WE, THE JURY
The Jury System and the Ideal of Democracy
Stephen J. Adler
Basic Books, $25, 308 pp.

THE JURY
Trial and Error in the American Courtroom
Jeffrey Abramson
Times Books, $25, 285 pp.

Winnifred Fallers Sullivan

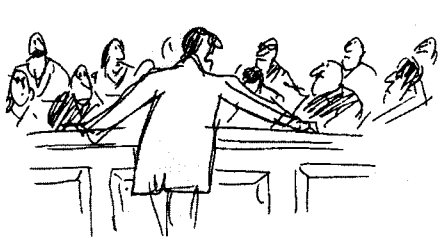
The American jury is much maligned. It is perceived by many to be ignorant, bigotted, and easily manipulated. These timely new books offer us strikingly different portraits of America in the '90s through a close examination of the jury in crisis. The jury is an appealing subject for such a portrait because it is such a difficult institution to circumscribe. After many studies and many books and articles, it remains strangely resistant to explication. How it works and even whether it works remain basically mysterious.

Any close-up look at the jury at work in a particular case shows it to be an unwieldy and crude tool for the implementation of justice. As these two books constantly remind us, the work of juries reveals us at our best and our worst—at once both sublime and ridiculous. Every tale of justice triumphant, as in the trial of John Peter Zenger, in which colonial jurors, under considerable pressure, refused to convict a printer of sedition, is matched with one of justice mocked, as in the shocking and hasty racist trial of the Scottsboro Nine. Is the price too high? Can the obvious flaws in the jury system be mended?

Abramson and Adler both examine the paradoxes of the jury and refer to many of the same cases. Yet they give us very different pictures of ourselves as jurors. Adler is a journalist. On the basis of interviews with many jurors, lawyers, and judges, he recreates six recent jury trials; one he labels a success and five he judges failures. His style is streamlined and fast-paced, full of colorful personalities, and of imagined reconstructions of jury-room debate. Some of the details of the history of the jury and some of the philosophical and constitutional issues that surround it are referred to within the context of these six recent trials. But the focus is on those trials and his story is largely one of failure. In Adler's view the jury system is not working and it needs to be fixed.

Part 1 of *We, The Jury* is titled "The Vision" and tells of the trial and sentencing of a confessed murderer in a Texas State court (*Texas* v. *Robertson*). Each juror is introduced by name and background. We learn of the chilling process of "death-qualifying" a jury. (Each juror in a capital case must agree in advance that he or she is willing to consider a death sentence.) In this case, two potential jurors expressed serious doubts about the death penalty but both agreed to follow the law and both were seated. Both also were reluctantly persuaded to impose the death penalty. It is a sobering tale. One is haunted by the stifled misgivings of these two young women. And yet this trial is the one Adler chooses to label a success because, as he sees it, the jurors understood what they had to do and took it seriously.

The second part of Adler's book, "The Disappointment," tells of five trials, each



"Can I rely on you trusty twelve to acquit my client, or have I been talking to myself these past six hours?"

of which demonstrates a different supposed shortcoming of the American jury. The Imelda Marcos case shows a jury which, according to Adler, acquitted out of ignorance and misplaced sympathy. A dram shop case shows a jury manipulated through the use of scientifically selected focus groups. An antitrust case displays the inadequacies of an uneducated jury to handle the complexities of economic issues. A huge award in a case in which a woman was infected with AIDS through a blood transfusion shows a jury blundering in the dark about how to determine damages. Finally, a murder case shows a jury acquitting a cop of the jealous murder of his wife's lover, in apparent defiance of the evidence. Adler asks us to second-guess the results in each of these cases and to condemn each jury as inadequate to the task before it.

While it is fascinating to read the reconstructions of these cases and one is drawn into the human drama of the jury room in each case, Adler's conclusion that these are stories of failure is less compelling, particularly after reading Abramson. Abramson, a lawyer and a political scientist, has enormous faith in juries as the most democratic form of self-governance we have. He makes his case through a complex yet exciting retelling of the history of the jury and of changes in the jury's make-up and role, constantly holding up to us the democratic ideal of ordinary citizens deliberating across community divides to arrive at decisions that transcend the work of judges and lawyers.

In *The Jury,* Abramson makes passionate pleas for abolishing peremptory challenges, for explicit acknowledgment of the value of jury nullification, for a continued requirement of unanimous verdicts, and for the end of the death penalty. In each case, the ideals of American democracy, from early self-government to the demand for equal protection, argue for a jury which is impartial without being ignorant and which represents the community and yet does that in order to foster better deliberation rather than to provide each segment of the community with a vote. Abramson is very skeptical of the vaunted power of social science in the selection of, and manipulation of, juries. He believes that the cynical attitude of the American public re-

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garding the effectiveness of jury manipulation is the result of inaccurate and unwarranted attention to the subject on the part of the media.

Race marks a huge exception to Abramson's general confidence in the competence of juries. The sad fact that murderers of black victims are far less likely to be condemned to death than the murderers of white victims, no matter what the race of the murderer, is, in Abramson's view, reason enough to discontinue the death penalty: "Even friends of the jury must acknowledge that the power to sentence to death is not one jurors can morally exercise on behalf of a community conscience that fails to live up to its own aspirations for color-blind justice."

After reading Abramson, we return to Adler's five cases of failure, none of which concerns race, with the suspicion that these juries were working better than Adler thought. Perhaps these trials were not failures. Perhaps, however clear the evidence, we had no business prosecuting Imelda Marcos for her crimes against the Philippine people; perhaps Pizza Hut had been negligent, in contrast to other restaurant owners, in its casual attitude toward lunchtime drinking; perhaps the impenetrable complexity of the tobacco antitrust case and the huge award in the AIDS case are not the result of flaws in the jury system but the result of poor lawyering and poor judging; and, finally, perhaps the jury had good reason to go with the cop's story in the last case.

Having read Abramson we are less sure of our own ablity to second-guess the jury. Adler wants the jury room deliberations to look logical and follow the law. Abramson warns us that at best we are getting a kind of rough justice, a rough justice that sometimes deliberately flaunts the law.

Finally we return to Adler's first case. Far from being a success story, *Texas* v. *Robertson* now appears a tragedy. It is the story of two young jurors being pressured to act against their consciences. Is it not precisely in capital cases, in which justice is arguably impossible to achieve, whether or not race is involved, that the jury fails us? Given a choice, Abramson's America, while deeply flawed, gives more hope of justice than does Adler's. □

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 2)

know. Why is Catholic theology so set against us? DAVID IMPASTATO

From the editors: We are glad that our correspondent did not find the material in the issue too difficult. As the *Newsletter* confessed, it was hard going for all of us and became more or less fully accessible only after repeated readings and much back-and-forth between editors and authors. To our correspondent, and other readers who share his reading of the essays, we urge a second look, followed by a third and maybe more.

We think most readers who try this process will find that the kind of theology offered by Nathan Mitchell and P.J. FitzPatrick isn't set against belief in the Real Presence but works in support of that belief. What Father FitzPatrick questions is not the "realness" of Christ's presence in the Eucharist, but what he considers the misapplication of Aristotelian terms (substance and accident) in the effort to explain that presence.

Similarly, for Nathan Mitchell it is less important to understand *how* Christ "gets into" the bread and wine than it is to grasp "how...we get to the table, and what happens to us once we're there." Citing Aquinas, Mitchell stresses the need to recognize that "[i]n the Eucharist two bodies meet: The risen body of Jesus (present now 'sacramentally' and 'substantially') and the '*corpus Christi quod est ecclesia.*'" In our reading, Mitchell's article gives no support to the remark Mr. Impastato quotes from the Philadelphia conference, and is wholly supportive of the kind of Eucharist he describes at the Catholic Worker house in Los Angeles.

This was failure?

Upper Montclair, N.J.

To the Editors: The "Et Cetera" feature in your issue of February 24 includes the line "...no greater moral failure sprang to mind than the church's failure to respond to the Nazi Holocaust." I cannot help wondering what definition of the church the writer had in mind. Surely not the definition some of us learned as children from the Baltimore Catechism, which, as I recall, went something like this: "...the union of all those who profess the faith of Christ, partake of the same sacraments, and are governed by their lawful pastor under one visible head."

By this definition, the literally tens of thousands of Catholic men and women who gave their lives in combat against the Nazis give the lie to any suggestion that the church failed to respond to the Nazi Holocaust. Add to these the millions of Catholic men and women who died fighting the Nazis in the occupied territories (notably Poland), and one can't help wishing the editors of *Commonweal* had done better than this unfortunate choice of words.

It might have been more to the point if the editors had spoken of "the hierarchy's failure to respond." But then one thinks of Cardinal Faulhaber of Berlin, and of other notable bishops who stood up to the Nazis. So perhaps the editors should have said, "the papacy's failure to respond." But here again, I ask the editors what they would have done if Wehrmacht troops had been encamped on Dutch Street during the Holocaust, as they were in Saint Peter's Square. Would you have risked martyrdom? If you had, it is reasonable to assume that you would not have been around long to carry on the fight, not only against the Nazis but against the nihilistic ideas that gave rise to nazism.

ANDREW J. HICKEY

Benedict & the chant

Aurora, Ill.

To the Editors: It was refreshing and rewarding to read Ralph Thibodeau's comments ["Chant around the Clock," March 24] on the success that has greeted the Gregorian Chant CDs of the Benedictine monks of Santo Domingo de Silos. His weaving of the recent revival of interest in chant with a history of its liturgical use in the church is a service to both liturgists and musicians.

I must, however, take issue with his connection of the Mass and the Divine Office in reference to the Rule of Benedict. Though Benedict does detail the singing

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of hymns in the liturgical code of his Rule (chapters 8-20), there is no specific mention of a community Mass. At best, it is only alluded to and would take place weekly rather than daily. The use of chant with daily community Masses came only several centuries later with Carolingian and Cluniac monasticism.

Nevertheless, I trust that Benedict himself would beam at the current retrieval of chant, and agree with Mr. Thibodeau that it represents an opportunity for a wider incorporation in the church's liturgy. JOEL RIPPINGER, O.S.B.

Dinter can thunder

New Haven, Conn.

To the Editors: I was pleased to read your review of Paul Dinter's *Beyond Naive Belief: The Bible and Adult Catholic Faith* ["Let the Thunder Roll," March 10]. As one of the Columbia College undergraduates fortunate enough to be able to attend Sunday night (10 P.M.!) Masses celebrated by Father Dinter in the John Jay Hall lounge, I can assure reviewer Dennis O'Brien that Father Dinter seemed to "thunder" Catholic faith and social justice during his homilies.

I would hazard a guess that these homilies shaped the questions asked and directions taken in the postgraduation pursuits of my classmates. Father Dinter engaged us not so much in the "*Lux et Veritas*" (Yale's motto) as in the Catholic challenges implicit in the Columbia University motto, "*In lumine tuo videbimus lumen*" ("In thy light we shall see light"). VERA SCANLON

What church media do

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: Mr. Joe McMahon [Correspondence, March 24] cites my "Postscript" in the Religion & the Media issue [February 24] incorrectly. I said something more modest than that the church media help make the church credible. I did say they make the church credible in the world of the secular media in the way Catholic schools make it credible in the world of education and Catholic Charities in the world of social service. In other words, the church can best relate to professionals in these fields by having professionals of its own. In my post in the diocesan newspaper of what appears to be Mr. McMahon's and my common diocese, I made some happy contacts in the world of secular journalism, based on similar professional interests. I am not alone in that.

I would further comment that Mr. McMahon, from the evidence of his examples, seems to take investigative journalism as journalism's primary form. I argued against that in my article and would continue to argue against it. *Commonweal* itself is an example of a successful journalistic enterprise that does not emphasize breaking news, whether scandalous or not. Its kind of in-depth treatment of religious issues would be emulated by secular newspapers and magazines to their benefit.

Even if they thought of investigative journalism as their primary task, diocesan newspapers are hardly equipped in terms of personnel (legal as well as reportorial) and even frequency of publication to deal with the kind of breaking news situations involved. The difficulty of this kind of reporting is evidenced by the fact that even the secular press, with its far greater resources, is rarely timely with its revelations, as shown by Mr. McMahon's own examples.

Lastly, while it may not break the news, the Catholic press certainly does report it. A reader a century from now, combing through the files of the Catholic News Service or most diocesan newspapers, would find an accurate picture of the lived experience of the church in our times, warts and all. In that, it is distinctly different from what Mr. McMahon claims to be its parallel in "union newspapers."

(MSGR.) FRANCIS J. MANISCALCO

The writer is director of the Office of Media Relations, United States Catholic Conference.

Jonah House expands

Baltimore, Md.

To the Editors: For twenty-two years Jonah House has rented space in the shadow of the nation's capital to make present a different vision. Over the years our work has included international efforts to resist America's warmaking, intense nonviolent resistance in the United States, support for the scores of Plowshares witnesses, years of jail presence and testimony, weekly sharing of tons of food with our impoverished neighbors, teaching nonviolent resistance at a local college, lecturing nationally on nuclearism and interventionary war. We have tried to live the gospel in serving the poor and teaching nonviolent resistance—the needs of others our single concern.

Always we have supported our work with the labor of our hands. Now, when our community includes eight adults, three young folks, and three babies, the walls must expand, elsewhere: Jonah House must move, and we turn to our friends for their trust and generosity. This is our first appeal in all those twenty-two years.

Gifts may be sent to Jonah House at 1933 Park Avenue, Baltimore, MD, 21217.

We are now deep into preliminaries to building at Saint Peter's Cemetery in the heart of inner-city Baltimore: negotiating with the Planning Commission, preparing garden beds, planting trees, studying alternative building methods. We have $45,000 and need another $40,000. With God's grace, your help, and the assistance of many volunteers, we plan to start construction this spring. At a time when meanness and exclusivity increasingly dominate public policy, a larger home will allow us to expand our services to the poor and to the wider national community, until the weapons are destroyed, war is outlawed, and the poor receive justice.

PHILIP BERRIGAN, ELIZABETH McALISTER, et al.

'Priest' plot errs

North Walpole, N.H.

To the Editors: I am no canon lawyer, but I seem to remember that the object of the seal of confession is sin confessed with a view to absolution. If I am correct, the plot of *Priest* would be mistaken, since the daughter was not herself a sinner but a victim of her father's sin [review, April 7].

Perhaps the canonists should critique the movie. (REV.) ANTHONY DI RUSSO

From the editors: We asked a canonist. He said the seal of confession binds if the

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penitent comes to ask absolution, even if the confessor does not believe the penitent is guilty of sin. Reviewer Richard Alleva says the scene in question leaves a fuzzy impression that the daughter feels personal guilt for what her abusive father has done to her; it doesn't show whether she asks for or obtains absolution.

We note that the review describes a later scene, in which the father enters the confessional not to ask forgiveness but to brag about his actions and threaten the priest. We see no reason why the confessor would be bound by the seal not to reveal this episode. But nobody here has seen the film. Interested readers may wish to judge for themselves, at the risk of offending the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, which finds the movie anti-Catholic.

The CIA in Guatemala

Maryknoll, N.Y.

To the Editors: I am pained to the point of tears by what I have been reading concerning activities of the Central Intelligence Agency in Guatemala. Mike Devine, tortured and murdered in Poptún, was a personal friend of mine. He the innkeeper and I the missioner shared many a conversation about our hopes and dreams for the people there. We certainly were aware of the structural oppression (read: extermination) of any who would seek freedom for themselves, their families, and their communities.

Human rights groups, church officials, and we missioners knew what was going on, and protested as loudly as we could. It is only because Mike Devine was an American that the record is now being reported in the United States. Where were the ears to hear us then? What of the reported 110,000 Guatemalans who were slaughtered in the '70s and '80s, and what of those who still suffer oppression?

The CIA recruited Guatemalan army personnel who served at the highest levels of strategic planning. It had to know what was going on. If it passed this information on to higher authorities, how could we go on supporting a government engaged in large-scale slaughter? If it did not, what does that tell us about the CIA's power and its use of power?

Because of my twenty years of military experience prior to ordination, I agree with the premise that we require intelligence data. How we get such information and what we do with it pose different questions. It is clear that a U.S. policy of protesting the slaughter of innocents would not have compromised agents of the CIA.

President Clinton has rightly called for a wide review of U.S. activity in Guatemala. I hope it is extended to all the CIA's activities and that the top-secret stamp, so easily used and abused in such circles, doesn't block the deepest of reviews.

JOSEPH P. LA MAR, M.M.

The writer is a retired lieutenant colonel who, after ordination as a Maryknoll priest, spent eight years in parish work at Poptún, Petén, Guatemala.

Counter rebuttal

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: In your issue of March 24, Jack Fischel's reply to my letter contains more erroneous statements based on secondary sources and gutter pieces:

1. It is Fischel himself, not the Pioneer Fund, who makes a political conclusion about Headstart based on scientific research at several universities. Pioneer took no position—it never does.

2. The 1989 London *Independent* "letter" was in fact a statement signed by several preeminent scientists and unrelated to any "positions" of Pioneer. Apparently Fischel relied on someone else's description of the "letter"—a tertiary source!

3. The statement in the Charles Lane article (a secondary source) that I was recruited to "wage scientific battle" against the *Brown* case is untrue. It is also stupid, since I was neither a scientist nor a litigator and no one would have offered me that task.

4. The Kühl book (still another secondary source) doesn't cover any of Fischel's points. And Fischel must have noticed that Kühl, like Lane, relies heavily on the railings of Barry Mehler, an insignificant figure in academe but who sometimes surfaces in his chosen role of ideological agitator, sometimes called "swastika-painting." These three cite themselves and each other in a comfortable back-scratching circle.

5. Dr. Henry Garrett, whom Fischel names with a triumphant air as if unmasking a villain, was in fact one of America's most prominent scientists. Moreover, I learn that he did not, as Fischel erroneously claims, testify in the *Brown* case.

It is unfitting that a theological magazine, *Commonweal*, was furnished by a "historian" with a trash article filled with serious errors. Such writing is more suitable for a supermarket tabloid.

HARRY F. WEYHER

The writer is president of the Pioneer Fund.

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FDR: His pervasive presence

BUD JOHNSON

When Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected to his first term, I was only ten years old, yet I was moved to save the text of his inaugural address from the newspaper. On the recent anniversary of his death, I took out that yellowed clipping still preserved between the pages of an old book of my grandfather's, *Washington and His Generals*.

Reading the speech after all these years it was easy to recapture the message of hope it inspired in our family during the darkest days of the Great Depression. Not only did Roosevelt assure us—in the now well-worn words—"that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself," he also pledged to seek the power "to wage war against the emergency as great as the power that would be given me if we were in fact invaded by a foreign foe."

The excitement of his inauguration, along with the belief that finally something was being done, was all around me and so were signs of his presence. When I went to the neighborhood movie house, the audience cheered FDR's appearance in a newsreel. The Blue Eagle emblem of his National Recovery Administration flew in almost every store window. FDR's voice on the radio became as familiar as Jack Benny's. We were reminded of his crippling illness only when people danced at balls on his birthday to raise money to fight infantile paralysis.

Only once did I see him in person, and that was during a family vacation trip to Washington, D.C., when he rode by in an open car, jauntily smiling and waving, the "happy warrior." As I grew older, FDR remained a presence, but I realized not everyone agreed with him. There were jokes about workers on WPA relief projects leaning on their shovels, or about the gallivanting travels of FDR's wife Eleanor. I found my high school classmates divided on Roosevelt's policies toward the war in Europe. All one summer there were heated arguments on our front porch about American intervention.

When I went to college the argument continued on campus, and FDR's candidacy for a third term was also troublesome. Although I was not eligible to vote I was impressed by the candidacy of Wendell Willkie, Roosevelt's opponent in 1940. For my freshman political science class I wrote a paper on FDR's reelection which began, "Today I saw democracy die in America...." Whether you were for him or against him, there was no way to avoid the FDR presence.

As the war went on and the danger of the Nazi threat became more ominous, I returned to the fold. After Pearl Harbor, I listened to FDR's "a date which will live in infamy" speech. I enlisted in a college army reserve unit that was called up three months later. The first time I voted was by absentee ballot from an Army Air Force base in France. I voted for FDR

And it was there in France that Roosevelt as a living presence left my life. In April, 1945, our bombers were flying over Germany from a base near a little French village in Picardy, a poor place in the midst of sugar-beet fields. I lived there with three other intelligence noncoms in a building that also housed a schoolroom. We often saw children from the school waiting outside our dining hall to take home leftovers scraped from mess kits.

After our group's planes came back, the crews interrogated, and the strike photos interpreted, it was often my job to drive the intelligence reports to headquarters. Late one night I bounced along in a jeep across the springtime countryside, a carbine at my side, to an old chateau on a wooded estate. When I pushed open a heavy hardwood door into the shadowy room that befitted an intelligence operation, I was shocked to hear that the president's death had just been announced on the radio. It was as though half of my young life had suddenly come to an end.

All the way back to our village I thought about that part of my life, about that familiar voice that would speak no more. I thought of the portraits of the Big Three in every little French café in the area: Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin—and FDR always first. What was there about this vital presence that had followed from a boy's home in Kentucky to the rutted roads of a poor village in France?

The next day I found it was even stronger than I knew. People in that down-and-out village came up to say, "We're sorry the president is dead." He had made them feel he was their president, too. □

Bud Johnson was for many years a special assistant to the mayor of Milwaukee.

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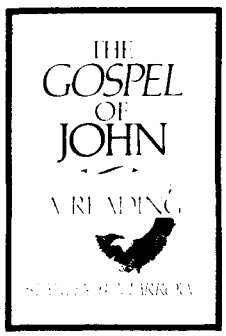

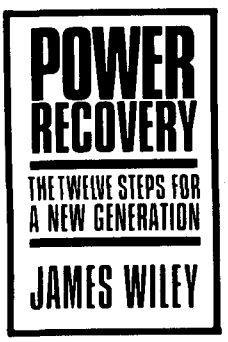

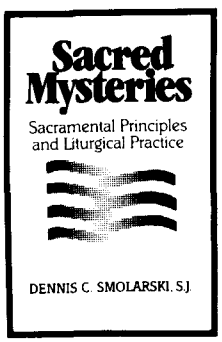

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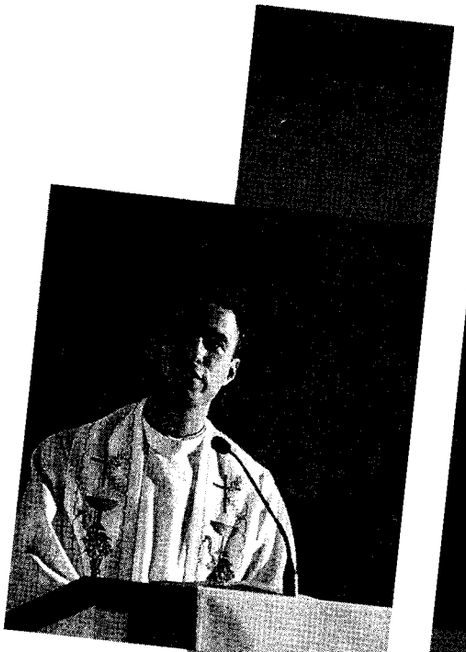

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